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ABSTRACT

On September 30, 1991, the House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families convened to celebrate National Children's Day and hear the testimony of youth ambassadors, teachers, and congressional representatives. This record of the congressional hearing includes the spoken and prepared statements of Representatives Patricia Schroeder, Joseph Kennedy II, Barbara-Rose Collins, and Diana Ross, the national spokesperson for the National Children's Day Foundation. A statement by representatives of the Academy for Educational Development offers an overview of the crisis facing America's youth, puts forth an argument for emphasizing youth development, and describes four programs that are successfully meeting the needs of young people. The bulk of the hearing report consists of the spoken and prepared statements of youth ambassadors from 36 states. The statements typically describe the personal impact of particular youth programs on the lives of the youth ambassadors, and underscore the value of these programs to young people in general. The testimony describes programs for at-risk youth, individuals in the foster care system, and minority students, and programs that focus on academic excellence, leadership development, substance abuse prevention, community service, citizenship education, and other aspects of youth development. Comments by members of the committee are also included. (AC)

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# NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY: HONORING OUR PROMISES TO AMERICA'S YOUTH

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## HEARING

BEFORE THE

## SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SECOND CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, SEPTEMBER 30, 1991

Printed for the use of the
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# NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY: HONORING OUR PROMISES TO AMERICA'S YOUTH

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1991

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES,
*Washington, DC.*

The select committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., in Room 2128, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Patricia Schroeder (chairwoman of the select committee) presiding.

Members present: Representatives Schroeder, Martinez, Collins, Bacchus, Peterson, Cramer, Wolf, and Smith.

Also present: Representatives Moran, Kennedy, Abercrombie, Hoyer, Mink, John Lewis, Frank, Norton, and Richardson.

Staff present: Karabelle Pizzigati, staff director; Jill Kagan, deputy staff director; Thomas Brooks, professional staff; Danielle Madison, minority staff director; Carol Statuto, minority deputy staff director; and Joan Godley, committee clerk.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Well, let me call the hearing to order, and I want to thank all of you for being here and being so patient.

We are very, very honored and very excited to be celebrating National Children's Day, where we talk about honoring our promises to America's youth.

Any nation that doesn't care about its children doesn't care about its future, so this is the day where we are really talking about our future, and we are so pleased that you are all here.

First of all, I want to say this is the third annual Children's Day, which is very exciting. And we want to thank the National Children's Day Foundation and especially our colleague, Congressman Kennedy, who was able to enable the 46 youth ambassadors from the 39 different states who are all here today, some of them posing as congressmen rather than ambassadors.

But we will take them either way that they come. This select committee was first established in 1983, and it has been a long tradition to listen to young people and to hear about programs that work.

One of our frustrations has been that so often it only seems that it is only news if it is bad news.

So today, we are going to hear from young people about programs that really do work, that America's youth are not totally lost, that we have found things that have turned people's lives around.

We are also, as a committee, going to be sending a letter out today to high school and college students across the country, asking

them to communicate with this committee about what their feelings are for the future, what we could do, and how they would like the Congress to re-focus.

We, as a committee, have also focused on a core group of programs of children's programs that the Federal Government has funded that we know work. We call it KIDSNET. It is like a net that has literally caught many children and kept them from falling to the bottom.

I have introduced that as a bill, and we are trying to get the Congress to fully fund it. After this last weekend where the President announced some cutbacks in defense, who knows, there may even be hope for funding KIDSNET and some of the other things.

So this Children's Day couldn't have been more timely right after the historic reduction of nuclear arms mentioned by the President. And I hope that the Congress is able to build on that, go further, and maybe we will even have even more latitude to get this country going on the right track.

I want to say to all the youth ambassadors who aren't testifying today, we are going to hold the record open for two weeks.

So if you have things that you want to say, please feel free to put them in the record. We would be very, very happy to. So you have two weeks to write out anything that you want us to know, get it to us, and we will put it in the record because we truly do want to hear from all of you. It is just that time runs out very rapidly.

[Opening statement of Hon. Patricia Schroeder follows:]

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. PATRICIA SCHROEDER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF COLORADO AND CHAIRWOMAN, SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

Welcome to all of you who have travelled from across the country to celebrate the third annual National Children's Day. And special thanks to the National Children's Day Foundation and others, and especially my colleague Congressman Kennedy, for enabling 46 Youth Ambassadors from 39 states to come to Washington to observe and share in this historic occasion.

Since the Select Committee was first established in 1983, it has been a tradition to hear from young people about their interests, about the major issues in their daily lives, and most importantly, their ideas and suggestions for improving conditions in school, at home, and in their communities.

But this is a special opportunity to hear from many of you about programs that work—about effective public and private programs in your communities that have served you and through which you have served others.

We will hear about programs that have enabled young people to reject drugs and alcohol, improve in school, recover from family problems, and make valuable contributions to others.

We will also have testimony about an innovative program in Arizona that encourages civic awareness and responsibility among youth by teaching them the value of voting, as well as testimony from a well-respected advocate and researcher on the benefits of positive youth development programs as a national policy.

And finally, we are privileged to have with us a teacher with a wealth of personal experience and knowledge to share regarding the changing nature of families and children over the last decade and the ability of the classroom, of families, and of the nation to respond.

Today, I will be sending a letter to high school and college students across the country, through school newspapers and publications that target youth, asking them to identify their biggest goals, how they feel about the world today, and what they consider to be the most important issue facing our nation currently. I also asked them to let me know what issues are important to their future and the future of the country. Hearing directly from the youth of our nation is a priority for me and for the Select Committee, and I invite all of you to share your thoughts on these topics as well.

For the most part, we know which programs work. In fact, the Select Committee has devoted considerable attention to documenting the benefits of a core group of programs from prenatal care to youth employment and training. Based on this work, I have introduced a bill called KIDSNET to fully fund the most successful ones—Head Start, Childhood Immunization, and the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

It is my hope that National Children's Day will mark the start of a new commitment to providing opportunities for all young people to enjoy their childhoods and to become productive, participating citizens.

For those of you not able to testify today, I urge you to submit your statements for the record, which will remain open for two weeks. We will consider *all* of your recommendations for improving national policy. I welcome you to Washington and look forward to your testimony today.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Let me now yield to the gentleman who made this all possible, someone who has an awful lot of contact with young people. And we are very, very touched by how he is always bringing that to the forefront in the Congress.

Washington, D.C. is not a place where people think of children first. They tend to think of them last, and he has been very, very good about bringing kids to the forefront and saying, we must think about young people first and last or we will never get the country on the right track.

Let me yield to Congressman Kennedy and thank him so much for bringing this wonderful, esteemed group to Washington.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

When you say I have a lot of contact with young people, I think that probably has to do with having ten brothers and sisters.

But first of all, let me just give a great big welcome to all of the youth ambassadors that have come from states across the country. I hope that you feel that on this particular day, that this city is your city and that this Capitol is your Capitol.

Too often in the City of Washington, as the Congresswoman who chairs this committee pointed out, the needs of our young people are simply ignored and unmet.

And this is your chance to let us know what your needs are. There are billions and billions of dollars that have been spent up here in the Capitol each and every day, and those billions of dollars are designed some ways to try to help and provide some assistance to young people.

And yet the people that we don't hear from are the very people that you are here today to represent. The idea behind Children's Day wasn't to just look at kids that are having a tough and difficult time, but it is to recognize that in this country today, whether you are rich or poor, no matter what the color of your skin is, that our nation is not spending the kind of time and effort and energy that we need to in order to provide a nurturing environment for young people.

The family structure is breaking down in America. And it seems to me that one day out of the year, the second Sunday in October, we can encourage all the grownups in this country to spend a little bit of time with kids, to just say that if a kid, maybe younger than you, needs to have a little help with their homework, needs to have somebody read to them, needs to go out and take a camping trip or just a walk in the woods, that a parent or a grandparent, an aunt or an uncle, or just an interested individual can come and spend a little time.

Because I think that if we can reestablish that link with the great joy and pleasure that the grownups can gain, as well as the kid, that that will enable the necessary funding to come for the programs that this country so vitally needs to spend on our nation's children.

You know, we hear all of the terrible statistics that young people face today. Twenty-six percent of the children under the age of six years old, or over a quarter of the kids in our country under the age of six years old, are growing up in poverty.

Forty percent of the young girls in America under the age of 14 will become pregnant at least once by the time they reach the age of 20.

Forty percent will become pregnant by the time they reach the age of 20.

Fifty percent of the kids that attend inner-city public schools, 50 percent will never graduate from high school.

Now all these congressmen up here, you know, we sit and make speeches on the Floor of the House to tell us how America is the greatest country on earth, how we are going to compete with the Germans, compete with the Japanese, be able to beat all these people; but fundamentally, if we are not willing to put the resources into the vital programs to provide decent education, to provide for housing and health care for our nation's young people, then what have we really gained?

And that after all is really the purpose of Children's Day. So I really want to thank all the Congressmen and to tell you the truth, this is a terrific turnout for a hearing. This is a day when we are not in session in Washington, and to see this many Congressmen show up for a hearing is really astounding.

And also I've got to say that sitting in this banking hearing room, looking out there and not seeing the faces of a bunch of lawyers getting paid $350 an hour to listen to us, it gives me a great deal of pleasure.

And I also just want to thank very, very much the Chairwoman of this committee, who has spent her life dedicated to the needs of people that are the voiceless in Washington, D.C. And I very much want to thank her.

[Opening statement of Hon. Joseph P. Kennedy II follows:]

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY II, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

First of all, let me give a big welcome to all the youth ambassadors who represent 39 states and have traveled as far away as Alaska and Hawaii to take part in this event. Let me also take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to you, Chairwoman Schroeder, for agreeing to hold these hearings. This is the first opportunity we have had to work together on a hearing since you have assumed the leadership of this Committee. I congratulate you on your new role as chairwoman. It affirms the position you have long held as a leading advocate for children in Congress. Children are fortunate to have a true friend to guide this committee and to fight in Congress for the programs that are desperately needed to give them a fair chance to succeed. I commend and admire your dedication throughout the years in advocating on behalf of our Nation's most vulnerable citizens: our children.

I'd also like to thank the Governors across the country and the chaperons for making this visit by these youth ambassadors possible.

I would also like to express my thanks to Diana Ross for her efforts on behalf of Children's Day 1991. Diana Ross's own life exemplifies what this day is all about—

overcoming the odds to achieve success. As a youngster growing up in the public housing projects of Detroit, she combined a love of music with a desire to excel that has made for one of the most exciting and inspiring careers in entertainment. As she has urged us for years, "Stop in the name of love so you can reach out and touch somebody's hand and make this world a better place if you can." That's what we're all about here. We are fortunate to have her as the national spokesperson for 1991's National Children Day. And I might add that as the mother of five she is particularly well qualified to speak out on the needs of children.

And finally, I want to extend my appreciation to David Liederman, executive director of the Child Welfare League of America and the steering chair of our children's day committee. Without his commitment to this project and his ability to bring in folks who are committed to kids, we would have never gotten this far.

Children's Day is a time to celebrate our children and their achievements. By many standards, our children still have a great opportunity to succeed in many fields. We have more students graduating from high school than ever before and the percentage of high school graduates attending college is increasing. Many of our graduates will be employed in jobs that require a high degree of skill and knowledge of sophisticated technology. Others will go on to become the top doctors, lawyers and bankers of this country.

But these are also tough times to be growing up. With the breakdown of the American family, it is harder than ever for all kids, no matter what their background, to get the love and attention they need to provide the foundation for them to succeed. The message of Children's Day is to set aside one day a year to honor our children, just as we do for our fathers and mothers, and make a conscious effort to spend meaningful time with our children. On October 13th, fathers and mothers, aunts and uncles, grandmothers and grandfathers should set some time aside to be with the children of their family—to go camping with them, to take them to a baseball game, to read to them or even just to go for a walk. By setting aside one day a year, we can reestablish that link which will provide our children with the foundation they need to reach their full human potential.

We have all heard the cold statistics about how the odds are stacked against our kids: 20% of the children in this country live in poverty; 30% of our preschoolers are not immunized against mumps, measles and rubella; 30% of ninth graders do not graduate high school four years later; 90% of high school students try alcohol or drugs and 4.5 million kids have a drinking problem; 100,000 children, on any given night, sleep on our streets; and teenage boys in America are more likely to die of gunshot wounds than all natural causes combined. But the picture is not entirely bleak. The good news is that by spending the necessary time with our children and providing access to a number of innovative and effective programs, we can reach out and help these kids beat these odds.

We know it can be done because right here in this room we have dozens of examples. Every one of these kids has risen above trying circumstances or has reached out to others in their community or has been involved in some program that has improved their lives. By honoring these children, others both young and old will be inspired to develop and participate in a variety of youth programs. Tammy Snow from Kentucky is a teen mother but with the help of the Wilkinson Street School she is an honor student and plans to graduate with her class. Ted Childers of Oklahoma was headed for trouble until participating in a recreational training program helped turn his life around. Kim Audet from New Hampshire has overcome a sad childhood of neglect to earn a scholarship to high school thanks to the care and attention of Webster House foster program. Ross Chandler from Connecticut has risen above his physical handicaps with the help of programs at the Newington Children's Hospital and now excels in school and wheelchair athletics. Malia Wai'au from Hawaii has brought herself back from attempted suicide thanks to an outreach program at her school.

Spending meaningful time and nurturing our kids is the key to raising healthy children. But the federal government must also lend a helping hand. Passage last year of the Young Americans Act was a good start toward beginning to fund these model programs. But in the months and years to come, we must work harder in fighting for programs and funding so that our kids can thrive.

I think Abraham Lincoln sums it up well: "A child is a person who is going to carry on what you have started. He is going to sit where you are sitting and when you are gone, attend to those things which you think are important. You may adopt all the policies you please, but how they are carried out depends on him. He will assume control of your cities, your states, your nation. He is going to move in and take your churches, your schools, your university, your corporations . . . The fate of humanity is in your hands."

Madam Chairwoman and members of this committee and honored guests, let's seize the opportunity and rededicate ourselves to improve our children's lives. The future of our nation depends on it.

Mr. KENNEDY. We also have a very special guest who I think everybody is really delighted to be with here this morning. I got to spend an extra few minutes with her earlier, very early, probably not her usual waking time; and that is our national spokesperson, Diana Ross.

Let's have a big hand for Diana.

Diana, I think, is really a very appropriate spokesperson for National Children's Day. First and foremost, she has five children of her own.

Secondly, she comes from a background where a lot of kids that have faced those trials and tribulations of growing up in an inner-city project in Detroit have had tough and difficult times.

But Diana has had the kind of family background and the kind of love that I think if we all gain, we can understand that each individual can grow to their full human potential.

And that really is what I think Diana graces us all with her presence here today, and demonstrates her deep commitment to putting something back into this country that after all has given her a great deal.

She has stopped in the name of love, and she is here to join with us and to make this a very special day on all of our behalves.

Thank you very much for coming down.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you very much. Thank you.

What I think we are going to do because we really want to listen to you—but I want you to know how many congressmen and women are here today. This is extraordinary. Joe is absolutely right.

So we will all put our opening statements in the record.

We are going to follow the rule. We have two ears and one mouth, so we are going to try and listen twice as much as we talk.

We will put our opening statements in the record, but I want each of them to introduce themselves; so let's start with Patsy down here.

Mrs. MINK. Thank you very much, Madam Chairwoman. My name is Patsy Mink. I am a Congresswoman from the Second District of Hawaii, and I want to especially welcome the two representatives who are here from my district, Jonah Mercado and Malia Wai'au.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Terrific, wonderful.

Mr. HOYER. I am a friend of Joe Kennedy's, who told me to be here this morning. And we all are very, very pleased to be here. What a great day this is.

Joe, I concur a hundred percent with your statement.

Diana, thank you for your leadership and service and giving of time. I know you are saying to yourselves, those lawyers are pickers. But we are glad to have you here.

My name is Steny Hoyer, and I am Chairman of the Democratic Caucus. And I am from Prince George's County, Maryland, which is 15 minutes down the road.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. And we know Joe, so let's move along to our next congressman, Congressman Lewis.

Mr. LEWIS. Thank you very much. My name is John Lewis. I represent the Fifth Congressional District of Georgia, which includes the City of Atlanta, which will be the home of the World Series when we win.

Let me just welcome all of you here to Washington as you participate in this hearing today, because you represent the leaders of the 21st century, and I am here to listen and to learn.

I would like to welcome the ambassador from the City of Atlanta from my neighborhood, Kern Tyler.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Very good. Congressman Peterson.

Mr. PETERSON. I represent the Second Congressional District of Florida and have been very much involved with youth issues. I commend Chairwoman Schroeder for convening this important hearing.

Before running for office, I worked for several years as a counselor and director of a program for the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders, and I am very proud to have had that experience.

I want to take a moment to recognize Kristina Kalley, who is here with her adopted mother, Anne Kalley. I salute them both. Kristina, with the help of Ms. Kalley, turned her life around.

They are a true success story of what can happen when people get together with some love and compassion. Appreciate you all being here.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Congressman Jim Moran.

Mr. MORAN. Thanks, Pat.

I am Jim Moran. I represent Northern Virginia, just across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. We have Bradley Beavers here from Collinsville, Virginia, not exactly my district, but it is nice to welcome him here and to welcome all of you.

It is quite an honor to have you here, and to have you representing the many thousands of young people who will shortly be our leaders and who we must be wholly dependent upon for our future.

Thank you.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Congressman Cramer.

Mr. CRAMER. Good morning. I am Bud Cramer. I am a new Member of Congress from the Fifth District of Alabama, representing Huntsville, the shoals area of Alabama.

I want to welcome certainly Nathan Ballard on behalf of Congressman Browder; we are proud of you and glad to have you here.

And Diana Ross, we are certainly glad to have you back on this important occasion.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Congressman Barney Frank.

Mr. FRANK. I am Joe Kennedy's neighbor from Massachusetts and delighted to be here in furtherance of a very important effort that he has had so much to do with.

You would all be very grateful to the Chair, Mrs. Schroeder, because ordinarily with 12 Members of Congress, none of you would have gotten to talk until about 11:30. So you owe her a great deal.

The only other thing I will note is that there are 12 Members of us who are here, and we are delighted to be here. And as perhaps the manifestation of who is interested in what in this country, all 12 of us here today are Democrats. None of the Republicans showed up.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Hear, hear.

Congressman Martinez.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Thank you, Chairwoman Schroeder. I am especially delighted to be here this morning because many, many years ago, I owned a furniture company that made furniture for Ms. Ross and delivered it to her house.

And there were many pieces that were outstanding, which Ms. Ross actually designed herself. In fact, she did such a great job that it came out in a weekly magazine in the local paper as the outstanding decoration of the year.

But there was one piece of furniture that I remember more strikingly than anything else. You had just had a baby and had just come home from the hospital, and one of the pieces you had us make was a little bassinet or a little crib that had some material that you had specifically designed. I don't know if you remember. But it had a bunch of series of hearts, little red hearts, and around each of the hearts it said, "I love you," and it is exemplary of your nature and your attitude and your firm belief in love of children.

So I commend you for your lifelong commitment to children. I would like to add that I was just this Friday in New Mexico at an Education and Labor Subcommittee on Human Resources hearing for the reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act of 1974. At this hearing, we were looking at the funding levels for the act. When it was under the jurisdiction of the Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Act (LEAA), we had allocated approximately $300 million for the program.

Today, we are spending $75 million for it. Hardly enough. Each state gets under the grant formula a minimum of $325,000. Hardly enough to do the kind of job that needs to be done.

And then we make great speeches about how we believe in our children and how we want to protect them and how they are the future of our country, and yet we don't put our money where our mouth is.

If we were doing that funding just at that level today, in terms of real dollars it would be $210,000; and that is hardly sufficient. But it is something that we need to start focusing on more and setting as a priority.

I said to the gentleman who was testifying before the hearing that we have no national youth policy although we profess to have one. He said no, in fact you do, when you don't have a policy you have an implicit policy that states that the Federal Government doesn't care.

And I agree with that gentleman.

Thank you.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you.

Ms. Holmes Norton.

Ms. HOLMES NORTON. My thanks to the Chair, Pat Schroeder, and to my colleague, Congressman Joe Kennedy, for your follow-through on the important issue of children in this society and what this society is ultimately going to do about it.

And my special thanks to Diana Ross, who once again proves that she is not all glamor and glitter but that she is all heart and a lot of substance.

Because what she has done to bring focus on this issue, we could not have done, the whole Congress could not have done, Diana, in a hundred years.

Look, we have tried everything, Diana and young people, we have tried. Glum reports, glum statistics, glum predictions. Maybe hearing from you will turn it around.

Thank you for coming.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you.

Congresswoman Barbara-Rose Collins.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, and thank you for convening this hearing today.

In the interest of time, I am going to ask if I can just submit my statement.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Absolutely.

Miss COLLINS. However, I would like to say in my own State of Michigan and the City of Detroit, one out of every two black children live in poverty—one out of every two black children live in poverty, and nearly five infants die every day in Michigan on the average, and more than half of them are poor.

So I would like to just enter my statement for the record, Madam Chairwoman, and to thank you and to thank my home girl, Diana Ross, for coming and leading off this hearing.

Thank you very much.

[Opening statement of Hon. Barbara-Rose Collins follows:]

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA-ROSE COLLINS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

Madam Chairwoman: Thank you for convening this hearing today to honor our nation's children. As we celebrate "National Children's Day" next month, let us not forget the extraordinary challenges confronting our children at home, at school, and in our communities.

In my own State of Michigan, one out of every two Black children live in poverty. Nearly five infants die every day in Michigan, on average, and more than half of them are poor. Juvenile arrests for drug offenses more than doubled in the 1980s.

As human resources programs continue to be slashed or severely limited due to budget constraints by the federal and state governments, more children in Michigan and throughout the country will be condemned to poverty, premature death, ill health, abuse and neglect at home, unwanted pregnancies, failure in school, juvenile delinquency, and chronic unemployment or underemployment.

Fortunately, there are effective youth programs—funded by the public and private sectors—which help to alleviate some of these problems. To cite a few examples, we are thankful for: Head Start; Child Care & Development Grants; The Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program; and The Job Corps Program.

Corporate America is also investing in our children. For example, in the cities of Detroit, Phoenix, Atlanta, Boston, Miami, New Orleans, Portland (Oregon), and San Diego, the Nestle Chocolate company is providing grants to these communities under their "Nestle Chocolate Very Best in Youth" program. These grants will be used for community service projects, recreational programs, dropout prevention, recycling programs, renovation projects, and self-esteem and development workshops. I applaud Nestle and other corporate programs that empower children to make important decisions, involve these children in productive activities, and help these children to connect with their communities.

Again, I appreciate your calling this hearing today. I look forward to the testimony from the children, as well as from the parents, teachers and researchers who care about the plight of our children and are committed to improving their lives and their future.

Thank you.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you. And our final thanks go this morning to an unsung hero, David Liederman, who is the Executive Director of the Child Welfare League of America.

He has been the steering chair of the Children's Day Committee; and without that hard work, this wouldn't have happened.

And now we are going to turn it over to you because we really did come to listen.

Diana, the floor is yours. We welcome you and believe me, we are all very moved by your commitment and your perseverance.

Thank you.

## STATEMENT OF DIANA ROSS, NATIONAL SPOKESPERSON, NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY FOUNDATION

Ms. ROSS. Thank you very much. Thank you for inviting me.

As you know, this is not something I am used to doing, so I am a little not quite at ease.

I would like to thank you. I am very happy to be involved in this project, and I think most of you or the people that do know me know that I have a special interest in children and I always have.

I can say between 20 and 25 years, because I have five children. My oldest is 20 years old. So they range from three years old to 20 years old. So I have always been involved in some form of something that had to do with children.

Raising them, their education, their needs, and just all the things about them and their friends and so on. So my efforts have basically been on an individual level, and I have been involved in education and AIDS and cancer research and the Children's Hospital at Christmas time and so on.

But I am very happy now that my efforts can be used on a bigger level for the youth of America.

I have handwritten notes, so I will have to try to read them, if that is okay.

The heart of my career has been to inspire. I have hoped to always somehow make a difference in my life, and I can do that, I think, best through the youth because in singing, the music is what the kids buy, and that is where the message is, and that is the way I try to relate the things I feel about your needs and what you can do with your lives and how to inspire you, whether it is "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" or go for your dreams and your goals and things like that.

In looking ahead at National Children's Day and the challenges that we have here in America, I find myself also looking back. Growing up in Detroit, I was faced as a kid with a lot of discrimination and poverty, and it was a scary time then. And I would imagine it is even scarier now.

It is very difficult for you to have the kind of life that is free and loving with the kind of environment that you have to live in today. And I think that the only way that we can do something about this is usually, from my understanding, is through communities and through our parents and through neighborhoods working together.

I feel that last night I was watching "Terminator 2," you know, and I am wondering if kids really think that something out of the future is going to come to save us and make a difference.

And it seems to me that the heroes are going to be our parents, and the heroes are our teachers, and the heroes are the community leaders.

And it is very hard to ask a child to care about the environment when they don't have food to eat, and it is hard to ask them to care about schools and things like that when they come home to empty houses and they have to be involved in gangs and things like that.

Because there is no way for them to have the security of a unit. And I think the only way we start is by building the foundation.

And I read somewhere about the children having a bill of rights, you know, that we can guarantee that they have food to eat. And we can guarantee that they have proper housing, and we can guarantee that they go to the schools that they need to go to, and that somehow there is no abuse in the homes.

But I think if we start there—I am straying anyway, but the young people really are the leaders for tomorrow, and I think the only way that I seem to be able to make a difference is through the work that I do and through my singing.

And I think as a parent, you try to be able to speak—to build a relationship with your kids in from the beginning. You don't start being a parent after your kids get to be a teenager.

The parenting begins at bonding. And I am a working mother, so I am not always there at home with my kids. But the time spent, the genuine time spent, the time listening to what the kids have to say, because the truth is, they are not going to come out and talk to you because they feel there is a generation gap.

And in this gap, it doesn't have to be that way if you have a relationship from the beginning with your kids, if there is a way to talk to them.

I am not saying I might not make a mistake in raising my children, but at least the effort and the intention is there to build up a trust where my kids can talk to me about anything.

And that is the way I feel about the kids of America. They should be able to talk to their parents. They should be able to talk to their community leaders about anything, anything in private, anything that upsets them, anything to get them to be able to have a voice in their future.

And the voice in the future means that they will end up being our leaders, because in 20, 25 years, we are not going to make a difference.

My 20-year theory is if I've got something to do, I've got to do it now because it is going to be over in 20 years for me. But they are really the ones that will be our leaders, and I feel like they are like the flowers. If we don't nurture the seeds, we don't have any opportunity for them to grow into leaders.

They will never be able to have the ideas that can make our nation into a prosperous and strong place to live. And I just think not only listening is the first thing, but also responding to their needs and starting from the beginning, just a one-to-one, trying to make a difference with the kids.

So as I conclude, I just think it is not just a one-day-of-a-year thing for me. It seems like it is a daily responsibility.

I know that when I was asked to be spokesperson, I am supposed to bring the glamor or something to the moment. But what it is for me is much more personal than that.

I hope not to—I come here really to say that I am very interested in children and the welfare of our future and their future in America, and I hope that just by my being here that somehow I can make a little bit of a difference or make a stand.

I will sing it in my records, I will do whatever it takes to make a difference for you and for the youth of America. So it is not just one day. It should be every day.

And I cannot put the responsibility totally on broken families because I am from a broken family. It doesn't mean that that has to be the reason why things don't work. It really starts with the building of a trusting relationship.

And if these kids know that Washington and our nation cares about them, then I think that they will start—self-confidence starts early. Someone has to trust them and believe them, say that they are wonderful, make them grow up wonderful.

So I really think it is every day. I am really happy to be spokesperson this year. Maybe you will have someone else next year, but it won't stop my efforts in the future.

And I really do thank you for having me here.

[Prepared statement of Diana Ross follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DIANA ROSS, NATIONAL SPOKESPERSON, NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY FOUNDATION

Thank you all for inviting me. I couldn't have been involved in a more worthwhile project. Those of you who know me, know that I've been interested in the welfare and needs of children for more than twenty years. I have five children ranging from three to twenty years old.

My efforts have been on an individual level, being involved in educating children's hospitals - children with aids and cancer. I am very happy that maybe now my efforts can be of use to all the youth of America.

The heart of my career is to be able to inspire and make a difference in the world that I live in .

Serving as the spokesperson for the National Children's Day Foundation has made me very proud and I will do my best to rise to the challenge.

In looking ahead, I find myself looking back at my own youth. It was tough being a kid growing up with discrimination and poverty. It was a scary time then and it even scarier now.

I have come to understand many things about young people of all nationalities as I have traveled all over the world. More than anything, universally, our youth wants to be heard and loved.

We must listen and try to understand their needs and most importantly respond.

How can we help the world if we don't first help our children?

These young people will be tomorrows leaders. In twenty or thirty years our country will need the leaders who are now our teenagers (our young flowers). We must nurture our seeds, planting trust and relationships.

Where do we start? We start in our homes, families, and communities.

There's not going to be a futuristic character - like the Terminator - coming from the future to change the world and make it a better life today.

The heroes are our teachers and our mothers and fathers. Where are the ideas going to come from if we don't nurture the young minds? Our gift is our children - Let them know that they are the future and help them get ready for it.

National Children's Day to me is about giving these kids a chance to have a voice in their own lives. To talk about the things that are important to them to build trust; their trust in us.

Most of all I want to leave you with this message. To go about doing this has a lot to do with leadership - people helping people - communities and neighborhoods working together - and especially families. We cannot neglect our children. The time you put in, you will get back double. We must work together in our schools and empower our teachers for education. This is the fabric of America.

National Children's Day will be celebrated nationwide on Sunday, October 13, 1991.

Make a world for children now, they are our future. It's their inheritance. Give them a world that's safe and loving, free from discrimination and poverty. Give them peace. We must do it now. Now.

It is my hope, and my dream, that through our efforts the year 2000 will be the year of the child - a year of celebration in which children all over the world are fully recognized and acknowledged for who they are -- our future.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you very much.

Well, let's start with this very distinguished panel and let's start with the Youth Ambassador from Arizona, Tammy Jo Granado.

It is yours, the floor is yours. Tell us what we need to know. Pull the microphone up as close as you can.

**STATEMENT OF TAMMY JO GRANADO, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF ARIZONA, PHOENIX, AZ**

Ms. GRANADO. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

My name is Tammy Jo Granado. I am 16 years old and a junior at Alhambra High School in Phoenix, Arizona.

I, like most students I know, am what many would call "at risk." Students like myself are labeled with this term which automatically stigmatizes us as non-achievers.

We are called this because of where we live, where we go to school, our social and economic status, our ethnicity, because I am a woman, or any number of other reasons which can impact our potential. But I will tell you that, to me, "at risk" only means not having the same kind of opportunities others have.

I live with my grandparents and brother. My grandmother graduated from high school and took a few college courses. My grandfather's education does not exceed elementary school. I believe this is one reason why my grandparents stress the importance of education.

In this sense, I am lucky because they do encourage me. Unfortunately, their limitation is that they cannot provide me with the avenues to find my opportunities.

Fortunately, there is STAR, which stands for Skills, Tenacity, Attitude and Readiness. It is a new program which has given me and many others like me the encouragement, direction and opportunities we need to overcome the obstacles we face.

Before I joined STAR, I felt confused and lacked self-confidence. I also had very little awareness of the world around me.

When I joined STAR, I found out that I was not alone. I discovered I had a lot in common with the other students. Since I have been involved with the program, I have been exposed to a variety of topics ranging from academics to social concerns and cultural awareness.

I know that each one of us has become personally stronger. We believe in ourselves, our abilities and our potential. We now have goals and are learning how to effectively plan and achieve those once unattainable dreams.

I feel so much more confident now that my goal of becoming a child psychologist is a dream that will come true.

And, as a program, STAR has achieved what many have said to be the impossible by becoming partners with our teachers, counselors, school administrators, with private business and the community as a whole.

The positive qualities STAR has provided for me and the other STAR members, as well as the schools, may not seem like much to you. But remember where you are and where I come from.

Where I go to school, almost every week a young woman drops out of school because she got pregnant. And it is not unusual to see

gang fights or to walk through the hallway and see a locker blow up and catch on fire.

And as if that weren't enough, Arizona has one of the highest suicide rates in the country among teenagers. When you come from an environment like this, overcoming these obstacles is very difficult, but it is working.

And our growth doesn't stop here. We are not only learning how to better ourselves, we are also learning to become mentors and give back to our community, helping others like us.

What I do is perform a dramatic piece called "My Name is Misty," to inform and bring an awareness about child abuse. This is my way of saying something needs to be done to address and correct this disgrace.

What I have gained through STAR will help me not just now, but in the future, as well. I know there are many more obstacles I will face.

The two founders, of STAR, Yvette and Virgie, have told me how important it is to be prepared, especially when you are up against the odds. When they were my age, their mothers told them about the days when restaurants had signs on them that said, "Blacks and Mexicans Enter Through the Rear."

Today, they tell me those signs are no longer displayed, but discrimination is just as much of a problem. It is only more sophisticated now.

So they tell me you may not be able to change the workplace, but you can protect yourself by being well-educated. That way, if anyone of us is a victim of discrimination, at least we won't fall so hard and be as devastated.

I sit here now before you not just to point out the problems that exist, but as a young leader. I have solutions and recommendations which I hope you will support.

First, programs like STAR are badly needed, especially in the inner-city areas where there is so much crime and so many students who drop out of school.

Secondly, to address the gang and racial problems I believe in a mandatory class of pluralism and cultural understanding should be implemented in every high school.

And third, to ensure that America's youth are being heard, I would like to see a junior Congress where students have voting rights to elect their state representatives to make recommendations on issues to you.

I want to thank my state, Arizona, the National Children's Day Foundation, STAR and you for giving me this opportunity.

I would like to leave you with this analogy: I am like a rosebud waiting to blossom but weakened by the elements that impede my growth.

This young bud is dying to open and become a beautiful flower. All it needs is water, sunshine, and care to blossom. So remember, as you call some of us "at risk," it is not that we cannot achieve but that we are only lacking the opportunity to succeed.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Tammy Jo Granado follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TAMMY JO GRANADO, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF ARIZONA, PHOENIX, AZ

I want everyone in this room to look at me. Take a good look at me. I know what you will see: A young woman, self-confident, reasonably attractive, well dressed, courteous and respectful.

What you do not see is the sad fact that I am one of so many other young people truly "*at risk*" in our society. I know, it is ironic because I do not seem at risk, but I am, and not very long ago was even more at risk of dropping out of school, dropping out of society and dropping out of life.

Let me tell you about myself:

My name is Tammy Jo Granado. I am 16 years old and a Junior at Alhambra High School in Phoenix, Arizona.

I, like most students I know, am what you would call "*at risk*". This label is a stigma, a synonym for non-achiever". We are called this because of where we live, where we go to school, how much money our parents make or don't make, our social and economic status, our ethnicity, our being women, or any number of other reasons which can impact our potential. But, I will tell you that to me, "at risk" means not having the same kind of opportunities others have.

Most of the students I know either drop out of school or simply lack the incentive to try. Some can't get out of their own infested neighborhoods to see what is available to them. Others don't have the support of their parents or family to venture out or explore their chances in the world.

I live with my grandparents and brother. My grandmother graduated from high school and took a few college courses. My grandfather's education does not exceed elementary school. I believe this is one reason my grandparents stress the importance of education. In this sense I am lucky because they encourage me. *Unfortunately*, their limitation is that they cannot provide me with the avenues to find my opportunities. *Fortunately*, there is STAR (Skills-Tenacity-Attitude-Readiness), a new program which has given me and many others the encouragement, direction and opportunities we need to overcome the obstacles we face.

STAR is what we have been looking for. Before I joined STAR, I was shy and confused. I had very little self-confidence. I also had very little awareness of the vast number of opportunities available. After joining STAR, I found I was not alone. My involvement with the program began in April of 1990 with a four day conference during which we were exposed to a variety of topics ranging from academics to social and cultural concerns. We also gained a sense of who we are and of our value to ourselves and others. We learned self-respect. I discovered I had much in common with the other students and was surprised at finding how many people cared about me. This had a great impact on my life.

Since then we have experienced and grown far beyond what we could have imagined. We are partners in STAR with our teachers, counselors, school administrators, parents, community and businesses. This partnership is providing an effective solution to our crisis. We have become personally stronger. We believe in ourselves, our abilities and our potential. We now have goals and are learning how to effectively plan and achieve those once unattainable "dreams". Now I know that my goal of becoming a child psychologist is a dream that will come true.

Through STAR, other students and I are not only learning how to better ourselves; we also are empowered to be mentors and give back to our peers and the younger students in our community. I personally am concerned about young children. What I do is perform a dramatic piece called "My Name Is Misty" to inform and bring an awareness about child abuse. This is my way of saying something needs to be done to address and correct this disgrace.

STAR is innovative, fun, and a friend. The STAR Program treats us with dignity, respect, honesty, responsibility, and expects no less of us. It gives us a sense of belonging. We are as dedicated to its success as it is to ours. For some of us it is our only source of support. STAR needs your help to assure that it can continue to meet its commitment of dropout prevention and leadership development.

There are many issues we face such as: pregnancy; drugs; crime; gangs; and many more. It is imperative that these issues be recognized so that all the obstacles may be removed from society.

You know I am among the lucky ones. I believe in myself. I will find the way to enter the mainstream of this great country and become a prosperous, productive, citizen. I will contribute my share in taxes because I intend to be a big success. If only I could get you to see that *being at risk is not terminal*. You can recover but it requires help; especially when the world seems to be caving in on you. There are thousands more like me who could make it if you would only find the programs and resources to get us back on our feet.

Just think about the young woman who finds herself pregnant. Will she lead a life condemned to poverty's vicious cycle or will she pull herself out so that she too can pay society back? I have an article here by Dr. Victor Herbert, Superintendent of the Phoenix Union High School District that tells you how to do it. I urge you to read it.

I do have some recommendations. First, establish a Junior Congress giving youth voting rights to elect their state representatives and with the ability to make recommendations on issues to the Senior Congress. This will give youth better representation. It will generate our interest and involvement in our government. It will better prepare us to be leaders and responsible citizens. Secondly, I would like to get beyond the stumbling blocks and see a mandatory class on the value of pluralism and diversity in the public schools.

I wish to thank my state, Arizona, The National Children's Day Foundation, and STAR, for this tremendous opportunity. I hope that I have done justice to those I am here to represent because these are critical times, and we don't have the luxury of hoping that our voice will be heard.

We always hear that we are the future...We hope that you desire a good future. I'd like to leave you with this this analogy: I am like a rosebud waiting to blossom, but weakened by the elements that impede my growth. This bud is dying to open and become a beautiful flower. All it needs is sunshine, water, and care, to blossom. So remember as you call some of us "*at risk*", it is not that we cannot achieve; but only that we are only lacking the opportunity to succeed.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you, Tammy Jo. That was very eloquent, and we really appreciate hearing about STAR and how well it has worked.

Our next youth ambassador is from California, and Willie, we welcome you. We now turn the floor over to Willie Starks.

**STATEMENT OF WILLIE STARKS, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES, CA**

Mr. STARKS. Good morning. My name is Willie Starks, the youth ambassador from Los Angeles, California. I am representing the Young Black Scholars Program, one of the best community-based programs in our city.

I attended Celeste Scott Elementary School, Markham Intermediate Magnet, and now attend King Drew Medical Magnet High School where I am in the tenth grade. I like to study, but I also manage to find time for basketball and jet skiing.

I live in an area of the innercity which is surrounded by drug activities and gang violence. There, a lot of youth have never been exposed to anything else, and many parents are also involved in drugs and violence along with their children.

But I am especially fortunate that my mother, a single parent, has taught me to feel good about who I am and the importance of a good education.

That is why I am very thankful for the Young Black Scholars Program, sponsored by the 100 Black Men of Los Angeles, Incorporated, and community co-sponsors who emphasize to all of us that a college education is essential for success.

This program offers academically structured workshops to increase our knowledge about college preparation, studying for the Scholastic Aptitude Test and cultural awareness.

At most of our workshops on Saturday mornings, there are guest speakers who speak on a variety of topics and social issues, including racial tolerance and identifying African-American achievements.

Because we usually meet at various college campuses and museums, we also have a chance to learn a lot about campus life and art.

I also think it is important that students who participate in the program are not only expected to keep above a 3.0 GPA but to achieve scholastic excellence in all areas. This is especially important to me since I plan to enter the field of medicine.

But the program is more than just an academic support group. It also encourages personal creativity through its seminars on journalism, world history, written expression, and computer skills, and it keeps in constant communication with the students through our founders, the 100 Black Men of Los Angeles, Incorporated, other community co-sponsors, our teachers, and through our Young Black Scholars' NEWSLINE newsletter.

The Young Black Scholars Program has instilled in me that a college education is no longer a possibility, but a must. And I look forward to the day when I, too, will be invited to be a guest speaker at a Young Black Scholars meeting where I can begin to give something back to my community.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Willie Starks follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIE STARKS YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES, CA

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Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Willie, for telling us about the Young Black Scholars, and good luck on being a doctor. That is a really incredible task you are undertaking.

Our next ambassador is from New Jersey, Maribel Videla. And we are going to turn the floor over to you.

## STATEMENT OF MARIBEL VIDELA, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF NEW JERSEY, DUNELLEN, NJ

Ms. VIDELA. Good morning, Chairwoman Schroeder, ladies and gentlemen of the select committee.

I am Maribel Videla, a senior at Dunellen High School in Dunellen, New Jersey. My family came to the U.S.A. from Argentina and Ecuador 21 years ago. I am pleased to represent my school, community and my home state of New Jersey before you this morning.

I wish to tell you about an effective school-based program in which I participate as a peer tutor. My program is funded locally by the Borough of Dunellen.

The "PIP" Pupil Improvement Program is a great class for kids to adjust to many things they are facing, not just in school, but also out of school.

Some of these crisis situations include peer pressure, family matters, drug and alcohol problems, pregnancy, school problems, truancy, runaway threats and potential suicide.

Since 1981, the "PIP" is early identification of at-risk students through meetings with guidance, administration, "PIP" personnel, and elementary teachers at Faber School. This helps to meet the transition to the high school.

The kids who are part of the "PIP" program sometimes see the teacher or social worker because they are concerned about classmates who might be in trouble.

Sometimes kids even recommend themselves for the class. They are not afraid that their friends will "mock them out" for being part of this program.

The teacher, Mrs. Marybeth Schleck, and social worker, Mrs. Cota Possien-Kania, are the adults in charge of the program, which is under the direct supervision of the principal and guidance department.

Sometimes peer tutors join one or both adults to be available when the kids need someone they feel comfortable to talk with. Sometimes the social worker runs informal group sessions right in the classroom. Other times she sees the students in private, in her office.

Both the teacher and social worker stay in close communication with the parents of the students. Home visits are sometimes made to check on students who are absent from school.

Students help one another with academics whenever possible. The goal of each student is to "Cooperate and Graduate." I have been a peer tutor for classmates who need help with homework or support to prevent them from dropping out of school. This experience has been very rewarding to me. I now work with the "PIP" social worker, Mrs. Kania, to become a peer counselor to help other students in need.

This program is housed in a regular classroom in our high school. The cost of "PIP" is one teacher's salary and 3/5 salary of a social worker—she is employed to work three days per week in "PIP". This type of program could be used in middle schools, as well as high schools. It builds self-worth and gives kids the feeling that someone cares. The "PIP" program has survived, not only because of the academic assistance and counseling it provides, but also because we all work together to achieve success and to stay in school. We work as a team.

I would like Congress to pay more attention to programs like "PIP" which help young people learn to cope with the monumental problems of fragmented families, because of separation, divorce, or death of a parent. Many of my fellow classmates have an "absentee" parent or parents because they have to work so many hours to make ends meet to care for the kids. Young people need jobs to teach them responsibility and decision-making skills so they have some income to help take care of their personal needs. Keep programs like the C.E.T.A. Summer Youth Employment and Training Act funded to provide jobs for young people.

I have friends who are heavily involved with drinking and doing drugs to help them deal with their family and personal problems. We need affordable in-patient and out-patient substance abuse

treatment programs for teenagers. We also need money for education and prevention programs to be expanded in the public schools. I am afraid that many young people will die because of drinking and drugs.

In your individual districts, I would encourage you to support programs that prepare young men and women for responsible sexual activity with low-cost, reliable contraceptive, pregnancy and AIDS prevention services to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

Finally, I would ask that you continue to recognize and commend effective programs like Dunellen's "PIP" program so that students in New Jersey and throughout the nation can be offered the opportunity to succeed and to stay in school.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my experience with you.

[Prepared statement of Maribel Videla follows:]

## Prepared Statement of Maribel Videla, Youth Ambassador of New Jersey, Dunellen, NJ

Good morning Congresswoman Schroeder, ladies and gentlemen of the Select Committee. I am Maribel Videla, a senior at Dunellen High School in Dunellen, New Jersey. My family came to the U.S.A. from Argentina and Ecuador twenty-one years ago. I am pleased to represent my school, community and my home state of New Jersey before you this morning.

I wish to tell you about an effective school-based program in which I participate as a peer tutor. My program is funded locally by the Borough of Dunellen.

The "PIP" Pupil Improvement Program is a great class for kids to adjust to many things they are facing, not just in school, but also out of school. Some of these crisis situations include peer pressure, family matters, drug and alcohol problems, pregnancy, school problems, truancy, runaway threats and potential suicide. Since 1981, the "PIP" program has been in operation to help the youth of Dunellen to be successful and to stay in school. Dunellen's "PIP" class was one of eight alternative programs from throughout New Jersey to receive a certificate of commendation at a workshop in New Brunswick, on May 9, 1990, with Dr. Saul Cooperman, former Commissioner of Education of New Jersey.

Fifty kids from grades 7 through 12 (out of a total student population of 350) are recommended by the principal, counselors, teachers or parents for attention in "PIP." These students are in and out of the "PIP" classroom during scheduled study halls. They might participate for one or more marking periods per year. One unusual feature of "PIP" is early identification of at-risk students through meetings with guidance, administration, "PIP" personnel, and elementary teachers at Faber School. This helps to meet the needs of incoming seventh graders who might have trouble making the transition to the high school.

The kids who are part of the "PIP" program sometimes see the teacher or social worker because they are concerned about classmates who might be in trouble. Sometimes kids even recommend themselves for the class. They are not afraid that their friends will "mock them out" for being part of this program.

The teacher, Mrs. Marybeth Schleck, and social worker, Mrs. Cota Possien-Kania, are the adults in charge of the program, which is under the direct supervision of the principal and guidance department. Sometimes peer tutors join one or both adults to be available when the kids need someone they feel comfortable to talk with. Sometimes the social worker runs informal group sessions right in the classroom. Other times she sees the students in private, in her office. Both the teacher and social worker stay

in close communication with the parents of the students. Home visits are sometimes made to check on students who are absent from school.

Students help one another with academics whenever possible. The goal of each student is to "Cooperate and Graduate." I've been a peer tutor for classmates who need help with homework or support to prevent them from dropping out of school. This experience has been very rewarding to me. I now work with the "PIP" social worker, Mrs. Kania, to become a peer counselor to help other students in need.

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In your individual districts, I would encourage you to support programs that prepare young men and women for responsible sexual activity with low-cost, reliable contraceptive, pregnancy and AIDS prevention services to prevent unwanted babies. I would also ask that you provide funding for innovative, supportive and educational programs for teenage mothers and fathers who are choosing to raise their babies.

Finally, I would ask that you continue to recognize and commend effective programs like Dunellen's "PIP" Program so that students in New Jersey and throughout the nation can be offered the opportunity to succeed and to stay in school.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my experience with you.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you so much, Maribel. Thank you for telling us about PIP.

Let me say even more Members have joined us, starting with the Ranking Member, who is way down on the end, which means he is the Ranking Republican.

What we did while you were all gone is we put in a new rule because we came to listen to the young people. So we are having each Member just introduce themselves and say where they are from, and we will proceed on, if that is okay.

Mr. WOLF. I am Congressman Frank Wolf, Republican. I heard someone say there were no Republicans. I am a Republican from the 10th district of Virginia, and I have worked on family issues. I am sponsoring a bill along with Congresswoman Schroeder which would increase the personal exemption for children zero through 18 years of age from the current $2,150 to $3,500, which would help families and children. We now have 250 co-sponsors, including most Republicans, and 101 Democrats.

Thank you.

Mr. BACCHUS. I am Jim Bacchus from Florida, and I am one of the Democratic co-sponsors of Mr. Wolf's bill.

I am just sitting over here on this side today to keep him from being lonely.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. I am Congressman Neil Abercrombie from Honolulu. I am Hawaii's answer to affirmative action.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Is that it?

You really have an incredible—I have never seen a hearing so well attended.

So Carri, we are now going to move on to you. Carri is our youth ambassador from Missouri, so ladies and gentlemen, Carri Farmer. The floor is yours.

## STATEMENT OF CARRI FARMER, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF MISSOURI, JOPLIN, MO

Ms. FARMER. Hello. I am Carri Farmer, youth ambassador from Joplin, Missouri. I am representing the Independent Living Program from our state.

I'd like to share how the Independent Living Program has helped me to overcome many personal obstacles that were thrust upon me as a child.

My childhood and early teen years were very frustrating for me. I was angry at my family because of the things I was subjected to. Some of those things include alcoholism, physical and sexual abuse.

During that time, I tested everyone's authority and pushed anyone who tried to help me farther away. Eventually everyone had enough, and I was put in foster care.

When I was first placed in foster care, I thought my whole world was over. I was taken away from my family and my friends.

At the time, I was very angry at everyone and confused about my life and in which direction I was headed.

Now I realize that was the beginning of my life. Before that day, I didn't realize what I was doing to myself. I knew that I didn't want to be like my alcoholic parents or like my aunt who never finished high school and lived on welfare, but I didn't know how to

get out of that cycle. I never had the support or motivation to break the circle that was twirling me around.

At first I rebelled against my foster parents. After a year, I was moved to a home where helping me with problems was not a priority.

After about a month or so, I was moved to a behavioral foster home. At first I had problems, but after a lot of counseling with my foster parents, I was placed on the behavioral program. The behavioral program falls between traditional foster care and residential care. I successfully completed the program and was enrolled in the Independent Living Program.

The Independent Living Program is a comprehensive skill-oriented program for adolescents who have been or are currently in the foster care system.

The program came about after a study was completed in 1985 in New York City. The findings were astonishing. The study found that 50 percent of the homeless had once been in the foster care system. As a result of this finding, Federal funds became available for the development of the Independent Living Program.

The program has been designed to work with adolescents whose ages range from 16 to 21. The purpose of the program is to instruct these youth in the necessary skills needed to become self-sufficient.

The Independent Living Program taught me many different ways of coping with life. I learned money management skills, human sexuality and responsibility, communication, decision-making and problem-solving skills, as well as many others.

One of the most beneficial topics we discussed was self-esteem. The night we talked on that subject helped me to finally believe that I am a good person, that I don't have to be like my family and that I can be a success in life.

Through the Independent Living Program, I was fortunate enough to be involved in a two-day Youth Esteem Seminar. It was held on the Southwest Missouri State University campus in Springfield, Missouri.

Self-esteem is one of the most important aspects of the program. It is only through raising the self-esteem of young adults that the program can truly be effective.

Once the youth raises their esteem, their decision-making process is more responsible. They begin to set goals for their future and learn to make responsible decisions about human sexuality and the responsibility of parenting. They are more likely to break the cycle of abuse and neglect and homelessness.

This program has prepared me for life beyond foster care. I now know how to provide for myself and become an asset to society rather than a burden.

Presently I am working as a co-facilitator for the Independent Living Program in Missouri. My goal is to help other foster teens to achieve the knowledge and skills necessary to be a success. It is only through programs like these that they may lead a successful adulthood.

As a youth ambassador, I have been asked to give views and recommendations to the committee in order to help build a better future for children, youth, and families.

After some serious consideration, I have listed some ideas that I feel could be a step in a positive direction:

Expand the education of society on becoming foster parents for teens.

Increase money available for foster care programs and foster parents, and make the money more available for foster children for clothing, special activities, etc.

Government guidelines for legal representation of foster children by guardian ad litems.

Develop other programs like the Independent Living Program to serve youth outside of the foster care system.

Expand service availability and financial support for the Independent Living Program.

Increase programs for runaway youth.

Stricter laws and convictions, heavier prison sentences, and extensive counseling for physical and sexual abusers of children.

I would like to take the time to thank all of you for being truly concerned about the youth of our country. I feel that by being here today, we are taking a giant step in working towards a brighter tomorrow.

[Prepared statement of Carri Farmer follows:]

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3. Government guidelines for legal representation of foster children by guardian ad litems.

4. Develop other programs like the Independent Living Program to serve youth outside of the foster care system.

5. Expand service availability and financial support for the Independent Living Program.

6. Increase programs for runaway youth.

7. Stricter laws and convictions, heavier prison sentences, and extensive counseling for physical and sexual abusers of children.

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Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you, Carri. That was a lovely job.

So many foster parents don't even get as much money as they pay to kennel dogs in many places.

Our next youth ambassador, I am very partial to, because he is obviously the youth ambassador from Colorado. And I really, really want to welcome him warmly.

Vernor Toland, the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF VERNOR L. TOLAND, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF COLORADO, AURORA, CO**

Mr. TOLAND. Thank you very much. I am very happy to be here.

I am privileged to have the opportunity to express my appreciation for the invaluable investment Jeffco Employment and Training Services has made. To effectively illustrate the positive, lasting impression my counselor, Brent Garrott, has made on my life, I must first share a story with you regarding my childhood.

I reflect now on a childhood in shambles. At age 10, I witnessed my father's health be destroyed by the brutal effects of a lower brain stem stroke. During the next six months, he showed miraculous signs of recovery due to his indefatigable spirit and hard work in physical therapy.

Suddenly my father became blind in his right eye as the result of an infection that destroyed his cornea. To add to this crushing blow, his boss abolished his position as sales manager, forcing him to scramble for gainful employment; he was the primary bread winner of the family. With the fear of being stripped of his manhood, my father slipped into a two-year depression. Next he was scarred by another blow—late-onset diabetes. Eventually, manic-depression then manifested itself.

Through the eyes of a young boy, I perceived the loss of my father to illness, the loss of my mother to the responsibilities of providing for the family, and the loss of being a carefree lad to the dizzying tasks of caring for my younger brother and father when Mom was at work.

As a result of the family dynamics being shattered, maiming and verbal abuse became an everyday event. Susan B. Forward writes in her book, *Toxic Parents*, "Unfortunately even the most concerned authorities can do nothing for the verbally abused child. He or she is all alone."

I felt all alone. My reaction to these events eventually became rage. I began shoplifting, stealing money from my parents, fighting at school and lashing out in any way possible. I was an angry, scared and confused young man.

After being in several shelters, my outcries were eventually heard. As a 14-year-old, I was placed in a residential counseling facility for a year and four months. This was a positive setting for me and I began to put together some of the pieces.

Unfortunately, because of my age and immaturity, I was only able to scratch the surface. After being released, I was living at home again; okay for three months, then I journeyed down a path that would earn me two more years in the juvenile system.

I began smoking pot and drinking. Wanting to party on a full-time basis, I dropped out of high school. I also began to shoplift and do burglaries with my criminal-oriented friends.

In the summer of 1987, I was introduced to crack. Three months later, I was faced with the reality of an enslaving addiction. With no job, I turned to more intense crime to support my habit—several burglaries a day, purse snatching and shoplifting. Eventually, I slipped over the edge.

Dressed in a disguise and using a toy gun to appear as if I had a weapon, I robbed close to a dozen gas stations. I was arrested at gunpoint by the Denver Police Department on December 21, 1987. I faced the possibility of 16 years in prison if I was tried as an adult.

By the grace of God, I received two years in the juvenile system. The next two years I was involved in an intense treatment program. With a new faith in God and loving, confronting counseling, I began to piece my life back together. Through daily groups, intense one-on-one sessions, community service and education, I began to build a foundation of remorse for my actions and a commitment to positive change. After a year and nine months, I was ready to re-enter society. This is where Brent Garrott of Jeffco Employment and Training Services entered my life.

I had a counselor once tell me while I was in treatment, "Vern, you can do all the work in the world on yourself while you are in here, but if you don't ever learn how to apply what you have learned in the real world, your work will be to no avail." I had to struggle intensely in society for two years before I realized the importance of this wise counsel.

When I stepped out of the institution two years ago, I knew nothing about personal finance, independent living, and finding and keeping a job. I quickly realized how hard it was to live independently. My parents were unable to offer support, emotionally or financially, due to a recent bankruptcy, an unstable marriage and the constant battles Mom and Dad had with their health.

I strongly believe in my heart that the single most important element to a young person's success, next to God, is his or her support system. If it weren't for Jeffco Employment and Training Services enabling my counselor to help me, I might never have had the opportunity to write this letter.

I think the best way to describe in a nutshell the difference this program made in my life is to use a quote from a speech I once gave. The quote reads, "At times that extra step has meant food on the table, hope when there was none, a direction to point my feet, self-worth and most of all it has meant someone cares enough about me to invest time in my life."

These committed people through programs such as Jeffco Employment and Training Services are the bridge between failure and success of young people today. They proudly demonstrate the message that young people are important.

Thanks to Jeffco Employment and Training Services I look back on two intense, eventful and positive years—from learning how to budget, living on my own, working hard, seeking out wise counsel and building positive relationships, to winning a youth recognition award, teaching peers the skills the program taught me, and the value of reaching out to other people. But most important of all,

they gave me the tools to become a compassionate, self-reliant and productive member of society.

Drawing from the background I just shared with you, it is my opinion that in order to help the young people of this nation succeed, we must take three steps: 1. Emphasize a relationship with God. 2. Intervene at a young age. 3. Empower. It was kind of interesting also in my own life—there have been times I went through several programs and had nowhere to turn.

One morning I had an interesting conversation with my boss. I work for the Colorado Outward Bound School. My boss, the marketing director, always gives me literature on Christianity. But my impression of him was that he wasn't a Christian. So I said to him, "You always hand me this material, but do you believe in God?"

He said, "Vern, can you say that Jesus Christ is your personal Saviour?" I said, "You're darn right I can." He said, "I cannot say that." He turns to someone else. "Can you say that Jesus Christ is your personal Saviour," he goes. "I don't know. You get into whether you interpret the Bible literally or figuratively."

When I am laying on the floor at 2:00 o'clock in the morning and I can't sleep and the walls seem to be closing in, I can cry out and say "God, this sucker is too big for me. Help me out, please." That is the message I give to young people. Some young people have nowhere to turn. These programs everyone talks about are great. I support them and we need more like them. But there are times when, unfortunately, even the program cannot help.

My other point is to intervene at a young age. When I was 16 and 17, addicted to crack, it was almost too late. I thank God for the opportunity to be here. I can tell you from observing my peers in the institutions I was in that the statistics are poor. When you get to be 16 or 17 years old, it is oftentimes too late.

So reach the kids at a young age. I think that is very important. That's what blew me away about the letters I received after speaking to a class of 4th and 5th graders—to see them at such a young age struggle with serious life issues like verbal abuse, substance abuse, and broken homes.

The last thing is to empower young people. The opportunity to testify before this committee is an element of empowering young people to say, "Hey, our government cares about what young people have to say. There are people in the State and Federal Government who care about young people." Now I am getting an opportunity to teach kids what the programs have taught me. That is an example of how to empower people.

I want to say thank you for the opportunity to say a few words. My most important point is that I don't have any major great ideas on all the funding and statistics, but I want to say, hey, let's take some action, whatever we do. Everybody put their two cents in and move forward and help young people because they are the most important thing in the world.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Vernor L. Toland follows:]

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After being in several shelters my outcries were eventually heard. As a 14 year old, I was placed in a residential counseling facility for a year and four months. This was a positive setting for me and I began to put together some of the pieces. Unfortunately, because of my age and immaturity I was only able to scratch the surface. After being released, I was living at home again; OK for three months, then I journeyed down a path that would earn me two more years in the juvenile system.

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1. Emphasize a relationship with God.

2. Intervene at a young age.

3. Empower.

Will extemporaneously speak on these three points.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you very much. That was very, very important. Thank you for talking about the Jefferson County Training Program. That is an excellent one.

We now move to the Youth Ambassador from Mississippi, Melissa Coleman. We are happy to have you.

**STATEMENT OF MELISSA COLEMAN, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF MISSISSIPPI, JACKSON, MS**

Ms. COLEMAN. Thank you. I want to thank all of you for the opportunity to speak for the foster children.

My name is Melissa Coleman and I am a senior at Murrah High School in Jackson, Mississippi. I am a High Honor Roll student and I am looking forward to going to college next fall. I am a peer counselor on the Youth Advisory Council and was voted most helpful.

I was removed from my home in 1988 because I was abused. When I first left home, I was very confused. I thought that no one cared for me. I went to a shelter in Hattiesburg, Mississippi and I still felt confused about relationships. After I left the shelter, I was hospitalized because I was confused and I needed help in finding myself.

When I left the hospital my self-esteem was very low. I then went to a group home. I did not know how to communicate with people. Therefore, it was hard for me to make friends. I thought I was going to be able to stay at the group home until I graduated, but there were some changes in the agency's policies.

Southern Christian Services for Children and Youth has offered me many opportunities and challenges over the last year. Upon my arrival in Project G.A.I.N.—G.A.I.N. stands for Gaining Access to Independence Now—I found myself too often in a precarious situation.

After learning to be patient and understanding, I began to develop a positive attitude toward both staff and residents. I began to conform to structure of the program shortly thereafter.

The staff has gone beyond the call of duty to extend my stay in order for me to complete and conquer the goals I have set out to reach. They have helped me improve my interpersonal skills and to understand the value of life. I have been praised for my leadership ability. I am on Senior Level at Project G.A.I.N.

Finding a job was my first and greatest challenge and accomplishment. I learned to work in harmony with others. My interpersonal skills, which were my worst enemy, began to improve. The money management skills along with other skills have given me the opportunity to explore the corporate world.

The self-esteem counseling, training, and practice in daily living skills—cooking, money management, et cetera—personal decision-making and communication skills, job and career planning and assistance in securing and maintaining employment that Southern Christian Services for Children and Youth has offered has helped me make my dreams and goals a reality.

After graduation, I am going to Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi and major in pre-law. I have chosen this career because I feel I can help the Mississippi legislators change

the drug issue. These kinds of accomplishments make me very proud, very proud to a part of Project G.A.I.N.

Recently at the 1991 "Lookin' To The Future Conference" sponsored by Southern Christian Services for Children and Youth in Jackson, Mississippi, I played Ceily Foster, the main character in a play depicting the plight of youth in State custody. I would like to share part of that play with you today:

Could it have been different? Remember the day you came to my house and you took me away? You meant to do well, you had a job to do, but I was afraid and, hey, I didn't know you. I remember the shelter. We tried to stay busy although most of the time I felt I was in a tizzy.

The folks there were nice. We had plenty to do. We never knew how many kids would be there, from 16 to 2. Some kids would stay, some kids would run. We all waited to hear when to court we would come. Hours and days passed on by. Sometimes I smiled but I wanted to cry.

Maybe I shouldn't have told at all. I could have made it in spite of it all. The phone rang one morning. I was hardly awake. The judge decided today we would make a trip to his chambers to finally decide where I would go. I wished I could hide.

The judge listened and finally said a foster home would be the best. I tried, I tried to fit in and act the part, although there was a lot of pain in my heart. It didn't work. I couldn't stay so you came again to take me away.

Back to the shelter and then to the judge. Confused and weary I began to carry a grudge. The group home was next. I kept to myself. I determined not to get close to anyone else. My wall came down slowly. I started to risk, to think things could be better. Oh, how I missed to be able to laugh, to trust and to care. Where had I lost it? It just was not fair.

There were times I needed an encouraging word, and even times I just needed to be heard. It wasn't easy being alone, getting older and not having a true home. Sometimes I wondered where I would be when it came time and they set me free.

The time came fast. Many choices to make. Am I ready or am I making a mistake? 2800, I said, 2800 of us in this State looking to you, as we watch and we wait, know we have worth and destiny too, something to accomplish, something to do. Keep looking for ways to equip and prepare those of us who without you all have nothing but prayer.

[Prepared statement of Melissa Coleman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MELISSA COLEMAN, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF MISSISSIPPI, JACKSON, MS

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I was removed from my home in 1988 because I was abused. When I first left home I was very confused. I thought that no one cared for me. I went to a shelter in Hattiesburg, Mississippi and I still felt confused about relationships. After I left the shelter I was hospitalized because I was confused and I needed help in finding myself. When I left the hospital my self esteem was very low. I then went to a Group Home. I did not know how to communicate with people, therefore, it was

hard for me to make friends. I thought I was going to be able to stay at the group home until I graduated, but, there were some changes in the agency's policies.

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After graduation I am going to Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi and major in pre-law. I have chosen this career because I feel I can help the Mississippi Legislators change the drug issue. Those kinds of accomplishments make me really proud to be a part of Project G.A.I.N.

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COULD IT HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT

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2800 of us in this State, looking to you as we watch and we wait; know we have worth and destiny too, something to accomplish, something to do; keep look-

ing for ways to equip and prepare, those of us who without you have nothing but prayer.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. That was fabulous, Melissa. Thank you for telling us about G.A.I.N.

We now go to the Youth Ambassador from Idaho, Shelby Justesen. Welcome.

## STATEMENT OF SHELBY JUSTESEN, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF IDAHO, BOISE, ID

Ms. JUSTESEN. Chairwoman Schroeder and members of the committee, my name is Shelby Justesen. I am a sophomore at Meridian High School, near Boise, Idaho. I am involved in a wonderful program called PAYADA, Parents and Youth Against Drug Abuse, Youth to Youth. I also serve as a "Natural Helper"—trained to listen to my friends in a helpful way.

I became involved in the PAYADA Youth to Youth program when my counselor at school shared a scholarship to attend a weekend conference. A friend then encouraged me to start attending weekly support meetings in our community. At Youth to Youth, I found that I was accepted for who I am. We are youth working together to give each other support in our drug-free choice.

Youth to Youth provides a safe harbor when things aren't going well, and a place to celebrate when I am excited and happy about life. Through this program I have become more outgoing, friendly, and self-confident—and I see the same things happening in other teens' lives.

I have experienced the tremendous pain when those close to me have used drugs, and I know that I have the opportunity to make my own decisions not to use alcohol and other drugs. Through Youth to Youth, I have felt the support of my peers, and the joy of helping others as they struggle to make positive choices. The opportunity to staff conferences, participate in skits, and travel to other communities in Idaho to help them start Youth to Youth programs has meant a lot to me.

As a cheerleader at my school, I am able to get out and see the problems and experience the peer pressure facing young people today. I see peer pressure as a major, recognizable problem for today's youth. Everybody knows it is there, but there are so many who won't stand up for what they believe in and say, "Hey, that's not for me!"

I feel fortunate to have joined Youth to Youth as an 8th grader before I had to face as much peer pressure as I have now. I learned at a younger age that it is okay to say no, and if your "friends" don't accept you for it, then maybe they are not great friends.

I now have the confidence to stand up and speak up for what I believe, knowing that I have wonderful friends who will join me. I am also learning how to really communicate with adults. After all, that's what PAYADA is all about. Parents and Youth working together against drug abuse.

Today, I am seeking your help. As members of Congress, you can support programs like PAYADA Youth to Youth that actively involve teens in leadership and training roles as we reach out to

others. Financial support through grants and scholarships can help us reach and train more young people.

Publicity, and sharing professional expertise as we create advertisements and media events will involve more youth and adults across this nation in drug prevention and youth development. Teens should be more involved in working committees that have decision-making roles which mold the future of our nation.

Through these experiences we all learn to communicate and share dreams for a better world. Your vocal support can open doors in the business community.

In a few weeks, the National Red Ribbon Campaign will focus attention on drug prevention. Many people like DEA Agent Enrique Camarena have given their lives to stop drug abuse. We have the opportunity as citizens to prevent drug abuse. It makes me feel proud as PAYADA Youth to Youth takes the leading role in the Idaho Red Ribbon Campaign. It feels good to share that limelight with adults who care enough to get involved.

I challenge you to speak out for youth-led drug prevention efforts. We welcome adult assistance and expertise, but we want our ideas to be heard. Join me and thousands of other Youth to Youth members in the United States and around the world who shout "The Choice for Me . . . Drug Free!"

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

[Prepared statement of Shelby Justesen follows:]

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you very much. Good luck with the Red Ribbon program. I want to say we have been joined by other Congressmen who slipped in. We are allowing everyone to introduce themselves and tell us where they are from.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. My name is Lamar Smith, representing the 21st District of Texas which is San Antonio, the hill country, and West Texas as well. It may be necessary for me to refer to myself as a Republican because of an earlier reference. The stories we hear today transcend politics and it doesn't matter whether we are Republicans or Democrats. But I think there is an element of truth to that earlier reference.

All I would say is, Madam Chair, if you would turn over a gavel to a Republican, we would probably have a better representation as well. The stories I am hearing are so moving. I have to point out that there has been a theme in the few stories I have heard. Sometimes government can be of help and sometimes it is an outside factor.

Vernor mentioned finding God. Someone else mentioned fellowship. I think there is a lot of truth in both sides and the solution can be found in many, many places.

Thank you.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you. Our final Youth Ambassador is here from Alabama. Usually the A's go first. I don't know how we worked this. We welcome you.

## STATEMENT OF NATHAN A. BALLARD, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF ALABAMA, AUBURN, AL

Mr. BALLARD. Good morning Madam Chairman.

My name is Nathan Ballard and I live in Auburn, Alabama, home of Auburn University. I attend Auburn High School, a public school with an enrollment of approximately 950 students where I am a senior. I am here to represent the YMCA Youth in Government Youth Legislature as the Alabama Youth Ambassador to National Children's Day.

Many young people in high school today feel that they have no opportunity to participate in government or they cannot "voice their opinion" simply because they cannot vote. I beg to differ.

I am afraid that some of the youth today have come to believe that the government consists of politicians, mostly men and a few women, who sit around and get virtually nothing accomplished. This is a grave misconception. I believe that the government is for you, for us. Now, especially with the recent changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the governments of the world are for you, for us, and for all. Everyone has a part.

The YMCA Youth Legislature Program has shown and given me a place where I can do my part. It seems as though every day I see more and more young people feeling that they can do nothing about their lives and their world. This feeling often drives them to such things as substance use and abuse—a real problem and tragedy in our society today.

Not only has the Youth Legislature Program influenced my life, but it has influenced over 650 other Alabama youth who attend Youth Legislature each year. They, like myself, have found an in-

terest to deter them from the negative influences such as drugs and misdirected behaviors that the young people of today are confronted with. I, and the others involved, have found something we believe in and care very much about.

I can see every day how the Youth Legislature program has changed my life. Before entering the program, I thought that participation in government began at age 18, when the opportunity to vote presented itself. I thought I could do nothing until that age. Yet after I entered into the program and became involved, I found myself doing all kinds of things to promote change.

Now when I see a newscast about something I don't agree with, I debate with and express my opinions to my parents and my older sister. The halls of the Ballard house aren't nearly as quiet as they were before I started expressing my political opinions with passion. I have also worked on political campaigns and attended national debating conferences. All of this I have done because of Youth Legislature.

Simply the idea of "Youth in Government" inspired me to go as far and as high as I can. When I made my first debating speech in the actual Statehouse Chambers in Montgomery at Youth Legislature three years ago, I set one goal to work toward—to be Youth Governor of the entire program in Alabama. After much hard work, setbacks and obstacles to overcome, I ran as a write-in candidate for Governor and won.

Youth Legislature has inspired me to set goals, not just within the program, but in all aspects of my life. I can confidently say that I am a better leader and person because of the goals it has compelled me to work toward. I set a goal as a freshman to get involved in Student Council.

Today I am First Vice President of my school and an active member of Student Council on the national level. Youth Legislature has not only influenced me to set goals, but also to try as hard as possible to achieve those goals, despite the risk of failure.

My experience with Youth Legislature has been an integral part of my obtaining a good foundation for my education, and I cannot stress enough the importance of a good education. However, I am afraid that there are thousands of children in my state and others whose education is far below standard.

I don't feel we as a government do nearly enough to better our educational system. The process to a better system may well be a long, drawn out one, but we cannot get discouraged. After all, education is the basis for the quality of life in this country.

A better educated generation makes a more qualified work force. A better educated generation means less racial discrimination. A better educated generation means that we have hope for maintaining the high standard of living that many Americans know and improving the standard of living for many Americans who are less fortunate.

I have discovered a wonderful program in the YMCA Youth Legislature that has shaped me in many positive ways. The only disheartening aspect of the experience has been the unfulfilled wish that all youth have the opportunity to participate in the program I so greatly love.

I frequently find myself trying to get more and more people to go to Youth Legislature. Out of all the people that I have influenced to attend, if just one life is changed as much as mine, it will have been successful.

[Prepared statement of Nathan A. Ballard follows:]

## Prepared Statement of Nathan A. Ballard, Youth Ambassador of Alabama, Auburn, AL

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Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you. Nathan, I think we will all vote for you. It is wonderful to see someone interested in public office. Now there are 38 other youth ambassadors here we did not get to hear from. I encourage you to write up what you would like to say so we could put it in the record.

I know some of you are in wheelchairs, but could the rest of you stand up so we can applaud your being appointed?

We are very proud of every one of you. Unfortunately, we had to select just a few. But all of you will have your testimony read and we will pay good attention.

Mr. FRANK. I would like to urge every one of the ambassadors. It would be a great waste if you came here and didn't drop by the Member representing your area. Some Members may not be there since there are no votes today, but their staff will be there. We have the directories around.

Everybody make sure to drop by his or her own Congressman's office, talk to the staff there about a few issues you are interested in. Get into that habit.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Joe, Diana, you have done a fantastic job.

Mr. KENNEDY. First of all, I want to say how proud I am of the testimony that each of you have provided this morning. We focus on so many of the problems young people are having. But each one of you have overcome some kind of difficulty that you face in your lives and I think you provide an inspiration, not only to us as individuals, to try to provide the kind of nurturing environment, but I also think we should take it as an impetus to continue with many of the programs.

I was struck by how many of you identified specific organizations and programs that provided you with an opportunity to grow in your lives and to get you out of some specific difficulty. Tammy Jo mentioned the STAR program; Maribel, the PIP program; Vernor, you mentioned about every program we have been through.

I think it really says something about the fact that we have to deal in the Congress with allocating resources. The fundamental fact is that young people in this country are second-class citizens in terms of where the Federal dollars go. So it is important, as Barney mentioned, that you go around and talk with the Members of Congress about the needs of the programs that you feel did work in your lives, to give the Members of Congress some sense that the programs we spend money on are actually providing people with a way out.

I want to thank you for that.

I want to ask a very brief question. I actually want to come back to that. Diana Ross said something I have to bring up. She said maybe we might have another spokesman next year. I want to say I think on behalf of the entire Congress and all the Youth Ambassadors, we want you back as our spokesperson each and every year.

Chairwoman Schroeder, I would also like to thank a couple of people who worked very hard on this. Chuck McDermott, I think, really pulled together Children's Day this year. Chuck, we thank you. It was a whole gang of folks who have worked very hard to be sure we could get your tickets and hotel accommodations.

There are many companies. I see some individuals with airlines and everybody else out there that have been helpful in trying to make this day possible. It is difficult to meet all the expenses that we face with Children's Day.

I want to thank all who made the day possible, including the chaperons who give of their own time and energy to make this possible. Maybe we should give them a round of applause.

I will briefly ask one question. That is, you talk about the programs but I notice in each one of your testimonies, you also talked about the fact that there was something in your life that enabled you to grow. You must have seen other kids that were having the same problems and difficulties, kids that were abused, kids facing problems with the law, but somehow you were different.

You were able to get beyond the problems. There are a lot of kids growing up in L.A. these days who are not on the honor rolls as you are and don't have any hope of getting to medical school.

Probably 50 percent of the kids you started school with will not graduate. But you were able to break out of there. Was it your family, was it your parents, was it a sense of family that can be created by others?

Mr. STARKS. Actually, it is my mother and my church. They are very supportive of me. They keep me away from different things. That is basically the way it is.

Mr. KENNEDY. Tammy Jo, do you want to answer that question?

Ms. GRANADO. Will you repeat the question?

Mr. KENNEDY. Well, Melissa.

Ms. COLEMAN. What kept me moving was that I had positive people who taught me that I was somebody and helped me to believe in myself. It goes back to education. If we have enough money to educate people, then we have better and smarter people in foster care.

In education, we have $20,000 spent for a man to serve in prison for committing a crime and we don't have enough money for education. So my point is education, we need more money from the legislatures, from teachers to social workers, we need to be a family and work together.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. I know this panel is supposed to adjourn and go to the hallway for a press conference. Are there any questions quickly?

Miss COLLINS. I want to tell Melissa what I think I heard her say was education of the foster parents also, educate them so they can be good foster parents.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Absolutely, so it is not warehousing.

Miss COLLINS. I don't think there are programs for educating the foster parents on how to be a good foster parent. Is that what you were saying, Melissa?

Ms. COLEMAN. That is exactly what I said.

Mr. MARTINEZ. We need to better scrutinize who the foster parent is. I have been aware that people are trying to get through school because they don't have anybody. If we think these loans are getting these kids through school, it takes more than that to sustain themselves and get through school.

In fact, we have only given tacit support at the Federal Government level to support these things. But the foster parents, I don't mean to demean those thousands who are good foster parents, but there are too many abused children coming out of foster homes. We have to take a good look at that.

We held a hearing recently in New Mexico. I feel I need to stress this because in Joe's asking the question of these kids, what guided them through the difficult times, I think what they were saying was that the programs that were there were the basic source of any help they got during that time.

We have to stress that. I am very disheartened because of the lack of Federal commitment to these programs. We are going to be reauthorizing the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act of 1974 which includes funding for runaway/homeless programs. I think we need to look at that funding that was provided there.

Let me read one of the pieces of testimony that was given during my subcommittee hearing in New Mexico which highlights the point that was given at the meeting. Dennis W. Noonan, executive director of Our Town Family Center, said:

"The program funded by a Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Act (LEAA) grant provided for mobile teams to respond to cases of status offenders, CHINS, PINS, reported to the court by parents, law enforcement, schools and child protective services.

"Staff and volunteer teams responded in the evening hours to provide crisis outreach assessment and referral series to 'youth and families.' The goal was the deinstitutionalization of youth by providing on-site or next-day services, or home-based counseling to families. This type of program, as well as the use of alternative placements such as youth shelters, was directly developed through the LEAA funding.

"Today those programs which survived make up the core from which many of the existing youth service centers/shelters funded by OJJDR and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act today. Unfortunately it is only because of the efforts of community-based organization that even a few of these programs continued to operate beyond the Federal funding cycle.

"As was the case with the Tucson Mobile Diversion Program, the juvenile court discontinued the program when funding ran out. Vehicles, equipment, radios, et cetera, remained with the court and had it not been for the efforts of the volunteers who worked as team members and a concerned, caring community, the concept would have ended in Arizona as it did in so many communities in 1978."

The Federal funding was only seed money. Certainly as little as there is now, a lot of these organizations will go out of business. This gentleman testified that many of the community programs ended when the funding ended in 1978.

Yet my friends on the other side of the aisle said, yes, but there is a lot of reasons why people get saved. Some is individual, some is church, some is religion as if to say we don't necessarily have a responsibility here.

When we decided the Constitution says that we must provide for the common defense, we go out and spend billions of dollars for MX missiles and bury them in the ground where they will never be

fired. Yet when it comes to finding money for these organizations, we can't find the money. But in that same preamble, it says "promote the general welfare" and we are not doing that.

Mr. LEWIS. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.

Let me just state for a moment that I was deeply moved, inspired and touched by each of the witnesses' statements. As someone who grew up in rural Alabama, was very, very poor, from a large family with six brothers and three sisters, I am serving in the Congress, you have inspired me to become much more sensitive on behalf of the young people of our country.

So I say to you, don't give up. Hold on to your dreams and keep your ideas, be an advocate of young people in our nation.

Thank you.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you, Madam Chair.

If I could make a comment on this side, I want to thank the panel, it was one of the most impressive panels I have seen in Congress. I commend you and second the statements made.

In following up on Congressman Frank's admonition to you, I agree that you should visit your congressional offices. One thing you should ask your Congressman about is the bill I am sponsoring for families. The family today is under more pressure than ever—child abuse is up as are teen suicides and teen pregnancies. And, there is the problem of twin deficits for families, the deficits of time and money.

This bill does not create another Federal agency or create a new building. It changes the line in the tax code that doesn't give parents more time to spend with their children, but it allows parents to make money so they can pay for child care and things like that. Moms and dads need to spend more time with their children, is the way we can maintain strong families and make sure negative things don't develop.

I think most members here today are cosponsors of H.R. 1277. I will write all members that were here today and say, because of your interest, here is an opportunity to help Mrs. Schroeder and myself. So when you talk to your Congressman, ask them to cosponsor or vote for H.R. 1277.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you. Family medical leave is going to be voted on in the Senate tomorrow. I know you would like to sit in on some of that historic debate. I know you have to get to your press conference.

We thank you again. You were all eloquent, wonderful, and it was very moving. Thank you very, very much.

The next panel this morning, if we can start assembling it. We have Karen Johnson Pittman, Vice President, Academy for Educational Development, AED; Director, Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, AED, Washington, D.C.

With her we have Marilyn Evans, President and Executive Director, Kids Voting, USA, Mesa, Arizona; and Mark Simon, Social Studies Teacher, Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, Bethesda, Maryland.

Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF KAREN JOHNSON PITTMAN, VICE PRESIDENT, ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT [AED]; DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY RESEARCH, AED, WASHINGTON, DC**

Ms. PITTMAN. It is really a pleasure to be here today. I am delighted to have been upstaged by as many wonderful young people as you have had here. I think this is really what this hearing is all about.

What I would like to do is to just very briefly put a challenge before you, because I think that while we can have hearings and while we can bring young people in regularly to hear from us, the job is one that adults have to roll up their sleeves and get to work on.

Concern about youth problems is escalating. The sheer number of task forces reporting youth problems tell us that something must be done. Alcohol abuse, substance abuse are just a start. I will get right to the point. While we understand that our young people are engaging in risky and health-threatening behaviors, while we recognize the problems require vigilant action, we must understand that the most effective way is to pursue the highest level of youth development programs.

That is what we are hearing from young people today. We did not hear these young people ask for prevention programs. We heard an eloquent statement about what damage we do when we label young people "at risk."

We have to create a new vision of positive youth development. It is not just that we have an adequate array of services, but also an adequate vision of what we want from our young people and an adequate mechanism of hearing from them what it was they want for themselves.

I spent the past 10 or 15 years going across the country looking at programs that work. One of the things most interesting is we heard today there is an array of programs that work. We are not very sophisticated about being able to explain why they work.

The things about communities that have the most impact on people we make almost magical. We talk about programs that are inspirational, about charismatic leaders. We have not brought the rigor to analyze what makes good programs for young people effective.

We place too much emphasis on problems. As we think how to go forward and how to act as the people here today suggested, it means understanding that problem-free does not mean fully prepared.

Too much time and energy is focused on getting young people problem-free, telling them what to avoid, where not to go. We have to go beyond this to be equally precise about defining what it is we would like them to do—putting challenges in front of them, and being vigilant about making sure they have the opportunities to set goals for themselves and how to meet those challenges.

I spend a lot of time as a researcher looking at national and State data. I would say that a conservative estimate is we have 10 negative indicators for every positive indicator of what young people are doing.

We can count how many are drinking, we can debate what that is, three or five drinks a day. We can talk about how many are engaged in unprotected sexual activity, how many commit suicide, but can we count how many are volunteering, count how many are doing things to contribute to their communities? I think not.

Too often our goals for youth are wrapped up in rhetoric: be good citizens, neighbors, parents. We have not defined those things. We have defined what we don't want them to be. We have defined our progress or lack toward achieving those goals.

This is the challenge: for every bad thing we would like a young person to avoid, we must be equally articulate and put in front of them the good thing we would like them to achieve. We have to achieve a creative balance in our programming.

We are trapped in a very dangerous form of linear thinking; a form that says we have to fix young people before we can contribute to their development. It says fix problems, then develop. As long as we stay in that trap, we will continue to put priority on programs or support, or policies that address negative youth behaviors.

We will continue to assume that, with the exception of education, the other kinds of things that have to happen to prepare people for adulthood happen by osmosis, between the community, home and religion.

We have to identify the things that promote youth development and put our dollars into them. I think it is very important that we change the way we think, move toward a new way of thinking about young people, not just as people who have to avoid problems, but as young people engaged in their own development.

They need our assistance. They don't need us to do it for them, but they need our assistance to be sure the necessary opportunities and structures are there. The young people talking this morning were talking about people in their lives. Some of them were in programs, some were talking about their families, but they were talking about informed, educated, caring people who could make things happen for them.

When we only set as a goal to have our young people become problem-free—when we suggest that there is a percentage of our young people who are at risk, and the best we can assume is that they become problem-free—then we will lose youths' attention and respect and we will not be able to achieve that goal.

Around the country, I think young people, families, program directors do know what works. We don't often know what works here in Washington, because we are not looking for the right things. We need to be able to document, express, and show evidence about what works to help young people achieve goals, not just what works to help them achieve problems.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you very much.

[Prepared statement of Karen Johnson Pittman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KAREN JOHNSON PITTMAN, VICE PRESIDENT, ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT [AED]; DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY RESEARCH, AED, AND WANDA E. FLEMING, PROGRAM OFFICER, CENTER FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY RESEARCH, AED, WASHINGTON, DC

## A NEW VISION: PROMOTING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Citizen concern about youth problems is escalating. The sheer number of task forces, reports, and media specials about adolescents indicates that many Americans believe our youth are "at risk." Indeed, the possible pitfalls of adolescence are great: drug and alcohol abuse, unprotected and premature sexual intercourse, school failure, and delinquency. But the potential for productivity and growth during adolescence is equally great. This is also a time when young people *can* begin to think critically and act deliberately. They *can* learn and respond to the requirements for a healthy life; *can* contribute to the life and revitalization of their communities and neighborhoods; *can* actively prepare for and even begin careers, relationships and lifestyles, and *can* develop nurturing relationships that sustain themselves and others. These abilities reflect the outcomes of positive youth development and are the foundation for successful adulthood.

Unfortunately, as a society, we merely seek to reduce youth problems. We rarely emphasize or promote youth development in any sustained way. In our desire to rear healthy productive youth, our policies and actions should not be restricted to prevention or cures but should include cultivating skills and meeting needs.

**Every day youth are exposed to and engage in risky and health-threatening behaviors. While these problems require vigilant action, we must acknowledge that the most effective way to reduce tragedies in adolescence is to pursue the highest level of youth development possible. This can only be accomplished by developing a clear vision of positive youth development and devoting adequate resources and energy to achieving it.**

**The federal government has assumed leadership in defining educational and health goals for youth. Yet rhetorically, we ask our youth to be not just good students, but good workers, good neighbors, good parents, good citizens. Equal leadership is needed to define and promote the full range of goals we hold for young people and to assess the extent to which the current array of youth services are helping young people achieve these goals.**

## AT THE CROSSROADS

If Americans wish to sound an alarm, they need only look at their young people. Regardless of background, adolescents are increasingly engaged in behaviors or faced with conditions which jeopardize their lives. These include lifestyle choices, attitudes toward education, and relationships to the larger society. **First, too many youth lack the skills and competencies needed for future success.** A national study released in 1991 reveals that most of American students have not mastered basic arithmetic at a time when sophisticated technology and computers increasingly require mathematical skills to succeed in the work place. Of those who enter the work force, many have inadequate academic skills, little understanding of the rules of the work place, and limited ability to work as members of a team, solve problems or make decisions. **Second, too many youth lack connections to family, school, community, and society.** Changes in family composition, the rising number of working mothers, less neighborhood cohesiveness and confusion about what roles are appropriate for adolescents have left many young people isolated. Youth also spend most of their time in schools, which increasingly have become large and impersonal institutions, where relationships with adults are narrowly defined. Ultimately, today's youth often have limited adult contact, supervision, or guidance, and opportunities for them to contribute and connect to their families and communities are scarce.

### A SNAPSHOT OF CRISES: YOUTH IN AMERICA

- A national sample of 26,000 students in private and public schools revealed that in mathematics, most high school seniors perform below the eighth grade level; only five percent are prepared for college math.
- Each day, 1,219 teens drop out of school.
- The 1988 National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS), reported that 27 percent of eighth grade students spend two or more hours home alone without adult supervision after school. 13 percent spend more than 3 hours alone.
- In a 1989 survey of youth values in America, 60 percent of young people ages 15-24 stated that they feel they know just some or very little about how government works.
- According to NELS 88, the typical eighth grader spends four times as much time watching television as doing homework (21.4 hours versus 5.6 hours per week).
- By March 1990, the Centers for Disease Control had counted 1,429 cases of AIDS among teenagers and although teens account for only one percent of the nation's cases, the number of cases is doubling every 14 months.
- A 1991 US Department of Health and Human Services survey revealed that about 8 million junior and senior high school students are weekly users of alcohol. 454,000 of these binge, drinking an average of 15 drinks weekly.

**Finally, too many youth engage in behaviors that threaten their health and their futures.** Researchers estimate that 25 percent of America's 10 to 17 year-olds are "high-risk" youth. They are involved in several behaviors which may have tragic consequences, such as heavy alcohol, tobacco and drug use, delinquency, unprotected sexual intercourse, or school

truancy. Perhaps most compelling is the fact that despite laws in all 50 states banning the sale of liquor to youth under 21, almost 8 million junior and senior high school students use alcohol weekly; and 454,000 young drinkers "binge", consuming an average of 15 drinks weekly.

Why are American youth faring so poorly? As comparisons of this country's youth problems are made with other industrialized nations, citizens have begun asking this question. Policy makers and service providers assert that current supports and services for youth must be reexamined. Some state that youth programs and services should be less fragmented and more adequate in number, duration and outreach. The recent drive to develop comprehensive programs, cross-sector collaborations, and "high risk" youth programs reflects this belief. While commendable, these programs, however, may fall short of our highest goals. **The problem is more than an inadequate base of youth services. It is an inadequate vision of what young people need and what they can achieve.**

Researchers, program directors and many others working with young people have examined youth programs around the country, especially those aimed at preventing or treating problems. **They know what works.** Regardless of name or original intent, programs that youth eagerly attend and benefit most from are those which go beyond treating or preventing high risk behaviors. They ask and encourage youth to set goals. They build competencies, and equally important, they push youth to contribute to their own growth and to that of their peers, families and communities.

## TOWARD A DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHY

For years, Americans have accepted the notion that -- with the exception of education -- services for youth, particularly publicly funded services, exist to address youth problems. We have assumed that positive youth development occurs naturally in the *absence* of youth problems. Such thinking has created an assortment of youth services focused on "fixing" adolescents engaged in risky behaviors or preventing other youth from "getting into trouble." Preventing high risk behaviors, however, is not the same as preparation for the future. Indeed, an adolescent who attends school, obeys laws, and avoids drugs, is not necessarily equipped to meet the difficult demands of adulthood. **Problem-free does not mean fully prepared.** There must be an equal commitment to helping young people understand life's challenges and responsibilities and to developing the necessary skills to succeed as adults. **What is needed is a massive conceptual shift--from thinking that youth problems are merely the principal barrier to youth development to thinking that youth development serves as the <u>most effective</u> strategy for the prevention of youth problems.** Nothing short of a broad national initiative will accomplish this.

## THE PROBLEM: "FIXING" VERSUS DEVELOPMENT

*"Adults tend to think of kids.. you know...they're just troublemakers..put 'em somewhere, let 'em do something. It's like, it's like putting your.... three year old, if they're messing with something, you're gonna throw 'em in a room just to play with a toy or something, just to get them out of the way.*

**- Youth speaking on Washington, D.C. summer youth jobs program, WAMU-FM, 7/31**

The radio segment cited above reported on pending cuts in the summer youth jobs program of Washington, D.C.. Like many youth who live in Washington, the boy quoted could be

characterized as "high-risk'. He is black, poor and living in the inner city. For this reason, his comments and those of other youth interviewed are pertinent. During this interview, not one young person asked for a prevention or treatment program. Nor did one suggest the need to be "fixed" or "repaired". Instead they mentioned the need for opportunities to learn, observe, and contribute to the well-being of their neighborhoods.

Their responses raise a key question: *Why do we, as policy makers, program directors and citizens, believe that it is appropriate to cut summer youth jobs programs to pay for substance abuse treatment? Why do we accept the notion that it is logical to charge a fee for after school recreation programs while offering free remedial education?* Because we are locked into linear, one-track thinking that suggests that problems must be fixed **before** development can occur. The result of this thinking is that, often, services that promote youth development are pitted against those designed to forestall youth problems rather than linked to them.

**Our concern about youth problems has caused us to divide the population of young people into two groups: those who are "at risk" and those who are "o.k."** Many recent policy reports state that, in many ways, all youth are at risk. This is true, but the growing public and private commitment to targeting scarce resources means that someone will always ask, "Which youth are most at risk?" This is a critical question. Far too many young people are in family, school and neighborhood environments that aggressively strangle their ability to grow and develop. These young people need **extra** supports. But linear thinking has led to the development not of extra supports, but different ones. **What has developed is a very disjointed array of policies and services for youth.**

At one extreme, there are policies and programs for "troubled" adolescents and young adults -- court-involved youth, youth in foster care, emotionally disturbed, runaway and homeless youth. These young people are quite likely to be clients of publicly funded programs which define youth needs in terms of placement, treatment and case management. The programs and services focus on treating the child's problems. Indeed, youth are often eligible only if they demonstrate serious and extensive problems. At the other extreme, there is a rich array of services and supports available to children and youth deemed "problem free". Frequently sponsored by community and private nonprofit organizations, these programs tend to impart some of the experiences necessary for adult success. Many are recreation and leadership programs which enhance teens' skills and help them achieve maturity and confidence. Often, they require fees. Too often, they do not accept or reach out to teens labelled as troubled.

In the middle is precious little to help troubled or at risk youth move from receiving treatment and targeted problem-prevention services to exploring opportunities to develop the skills and traits essential to succeed as an adult. Transitional programs for youth already in the child welfare, juvenile justice and mental health systems are woefully underfunded as are services to help those first encountering the systems avoid unnecessarily long entanglements. The chronic underfunding of the public child-serving systems as a whole has made the shift of emphasis from crisis to early intervention and transition difficult to achieve. Outside of these systems, there are an impressive number of sound prevention programs that seek to prevent youth problems by offering a combination of focused prevention services and broader developmental supports. But these programs serve only a small proportion of youth and operate in an even more precarious fiscal climate. Far too often, youth are presented with ineffective prevention strategies ranging from punitive policies that withhold desired privileges (e.g., team sports, driver's licenses) from students who are not enrolled or not doing well in school to extremely targeted programs and curricula designed to help students avoid particular high-risk

behaviors.

**Thinking that we have to fix problems before we can do anything to promote development means that we set priorities inappropriately.** The public dollars allocated to youth are far too few, but those that do flow are disproportionately allocated to intervention, placement, and treatment for "high-risk" youth. The debate in Congress, in city halls and town meetings becomes which problem to prioritize, which youth to define as eligible. As more attention is focused on youth problems, public and private dollars for the development of young people teetering just outside of these systems dwindle. Youth programs that reach youth in high-risk settings but do not limit their focus to reducing problem behaviors come to be viewed as beneficial but not essential. Ultimately, these programs -- which most agree are the best of what are now called "prevention" programs -- are forced to accept funding which pushes them to provide fragmented, problem-focused programming at the expense of broader services and opportunities critical to problem-prevention.

> *"The problem we face on the front line is that when money becomes available, it is categorical money---you go after teen pregnancy money, or drug abuse money,or young fathers money. There's not much assignment of funds to generic programs and that makes things really tough."*
>
> -Arthur Elster, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, University of Utah Medical Center and researcher on adolescent fatherhood

## THE SOLUTION: "FIXING" THROUGH DEVELOPMENT

If we continue to believe that the only way to help "at risk" young people is to devote more resources to "fixing" their problems, we will not only fail, but also seriously weaken an already fragile system of youth development supports. There is growing agreement that the high risk behaviors that have received so much public and political attention cannot be reduced without meeting youth's needs and cultivating their skills -- in essence, without addressing the broader issue of youth development.

> *"Today, one in four adolescents in the United States engages in high-risk behaviors that endanger his or her own health and well-being and that of others...We must reach these young people early and provide them with both the means and the motivation to avoid risky... destructive activities....Where damage has already occured, we must also help those young people experiencing problems cope with the consequences of their actions.*
>
> *Society's concern and involvement must also extend to the three-quarters of young people at low and moderate risk of serious problems. Their transition to adulthood is often equally difficult...*
>
> *Unfortunately, too few adults invest the personal time and effort to encourage, guide, and befriend young people who are struggling to develop the skills and confidence necessary for a successful and satisfying adult life. Too few communities encourage and recognize community service by young people. And too few offer programs and activities to promote healthy adolescent development...As a result, many young people believe they have little to lose by dropping out of school, having a baby as an unmarried teenager, and committing crimes."*
>
> -*Beyond Rhetoric*, The National Commission on Children

The best way to help at risk youth is to provide them with the same types of supports and services other adolescents need. It means engaging youth, their families, and their communities in developing the ***skills and potential*** of young people and in helping youth define and achieve their ***goals***. In shaping those goals, it is equally important that we provide youth with evidence and examples of why risk taking behaviors can inhibit or diminish their ambitions.

This approach is valuable for two reasons. It recognizes that we have created a bloated, vastly overextented, system of treatment/intervention (or secondary supports) while ignoring, to the detriment of all youth, primary supports that build competencies and prepare adolescents for adulthood. It also promotes a unified youth policy. Rather than stratify and segregate at risk and "problem-free" young people, it connects intervention, treatment and prevention with development.

## DEFINING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

If we establish youth development as a goal for all young people, how do we define it? A single, commonly used definition does not exist. Instead, discussion often revolves around what we wish youth to be or not to be, for example, good citizens rather than criminals. Our definition regards the reduction of risky behaviors and existing problems as important. But, it asserts that competence and strong connections to the larger society are essential and invaluable in preparing youth for the challenges of adulthood. Indeed, it is not enough to develop strategies to prevent dangerous things, such as substance abuse, or to preach against behaviors that place youth in jeopardy. We must be equally adamant about stating and enabling goals that we wish young people to achieve--post-secondary education, community involvement, civic contribution, and leadership roles.

To begin, **the term youth development must be attached firmly to young people, not wholly to the institutions that serve them.** Just as schools have become known as the sole agents of education, youth-serving institutions and organizations have too often been ascribed the responsibility of youth development. Youth development, however, should be seen as an ongoing, inevitable process in which all youth are engaged and participate. The emphases here is on **constancy** ("ongoing") and **inclusion** ("all youth")". The process of development occurs in schools, programs, communities, and day-to-day interactions with peers, family, and neighbors. Each sector of society has responsibility for the well-being and development of our youth. Likewise, **all** youth regardless of background or circumstance experience the process of youth development. This definition ascribes value to every young person and indeed, each youth through his contribution or failure to contribute to society will affect the lives of others.

Even in the face of limited family support and formal or informal programs, all young people will seek ways to meet their basic physical and social needs and to build the competencies or knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in adolescence and adulthood. Herein lies the crux of youth development. To develop maturity and self-fulfillment, young people must become both competent and connected to their families and communities. To do so, skills (or competencies) must be acquired and the basic human needs that combine to determine young people's confidence and commitment to others must be met. These are the two critical components of youth development:

| MEETING NEEDS | *plus* | BUILDING COMPETENCIES |
|---|---|---|
| Young people have basic needs critical to survival and healthy development. **They are a sense of:** | | To succeed as adults, youth must acquire adequate attitudes, behaviors, and skills in five areas: |
| **Safety** and structure | | **Health**<br>Good current health status and evidence of knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors that will assure future well-being, for example, exercise, good nutrition, and effective contraceptive practices. |
| **Belonging** and membership | | **Personal/Social**<br>Intrapersonal skills--an ability to understand emotions and practice self-discipline; and interpersonal skills, such as working with others, developing and sustaining friendships through cooperation, empathy, negotiation and developing judgement skills and a coping system. |
| **Self-worth** and an ability to contribute | | **Knowledge, Reasoning and Creativity**<br>A broad base of knowledge and an ability to appreciate and demonstrate creative expression. Good oral, written, problem-solving, and an ability to learn. Interest in life-long learning and achieving. |
| **Independence** and control over one's life | | **Vocational**<br>A broad understanding and awareness of life options and the steps to take in making choices. Adequate preparation for work and family life, and an understanding of the value and purpose of family, work and leisure. |
| **Closeness** and several good relationships | | **Citizenship**<br>Understanding of their nation's, their community's and their racial, ethnic, or cultural group's history and values. Desire to be ethical and to be involved in efforts that contribute to the broader good. |
| **Competence** and mastery | | |

It is clear that we want our young people to be competent. We also, however, admonish them to be confident, caring, committed to the broader good. These last goals can only be achieved if we pay as much attention to the environments that we create for young people's learning as we do to the content of that learning. By offering them opportunities to develop skills, contribute, belong, form close relationships, and safely explore new ideas while avoiding real risks, we nurture them and encourage their growth. That must be our contribution to what is, in the end, their development.



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## AFFECTING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

*"Youth development ought not be viewed as a happenstance matter. While children can, and often do, make the best of difficult circumstances, they cannot be sustained and helped to grow by chance arrangements or makeshift events. Something far more intentional is required: a place, a league, a form of association, a gathering of people where value is placed on continuity, predictability, history, tradition, and a chance to test out new behaviors."*
-Youth Development Committee of the Lilly Endowment

Whether and how young people meet their basic needs and acquire the maturity, confidence, and skills critical in adulthood depends largely on the influences in their lives. Evidence exists that family, peers, schools, community groups, religious organizations and places of employment are critical in determining a youth's development. Indeed, these places and people can be viewed as potential "agents" of youth development.

Both research and common sense suggest that we have been far too narrow in our definitions of what is important. Too much attention is devoted to assessing youths' academic competence and to mapping out the content of formal classroom learning. Youth development is more than this. It is a process that involves experiential learning as much as formal instruction. It is an outcome that has academic competence as only one component. Youth development occurs in an environment that extends well beyond the school doors. There are key people in this environment -- family members, gang members, teachers, youth leaders, peers, neighbors, drug dealers, employers. There are key places in this environment -- home, school, community organizations, the block, the mall, the alley, the rec center, the religious organization, the crack house. Their impact can be positive or negative; strong or weak. Together, their combined impacts can be reinforcing or conflicting.

Some of these people and places may contribute to young people's feelings of self-worth, membership, safety. Others may provide instruction and experiences that lead to the development of competencies. A few, we would hope, will do both. These people and places will become the agents that have the most powerful impact on young people's lives.

Young people will find these central people and central places because they are commited to their own development. If we do not want these people to be drug dealers, gang leaders, drifters; if we do not want these places to be back alleys, vacant lots, malls, then we have to be much more aggressive in reaching and holding the interest and respect of our youth.

Our role as policy makers, program directors, and citizens is to create environments in which young people can develop the confidence, caring and competencies necessary to lead independent and productive lives. Because research strongly suggests that no single organization, program or person can ensure the healthy development of young people, we must create a web of supports that extends from the family outward. Schools are a critical part of this web. So to are the array of organizations -- public and private -- that offer young people opportunities to take healthy risks, make real choices and contributions, and form lasting relationships, as well as those designed to help youth cope with serious problems.

## PROGRAMS THAT WORK

For many youth, the family serves as the central place and central people. These youth still have a very real need for other places and people to assist them in their development. School and community are key parts of their lives. But for young people who's family supports are weak, whose schools and communities are deplete of natural role models and opportunities, or whose personal decisions have led them into high-risk behaviors, more is needed.

There are more than 400 national youth-serving organizations in America and over 17,000 U.S. nonprofits that have youth programming as their primary focus. A diverse group, they range from large national organizations, like the Boy Scouts, that serve millions of youth and have budgets of more than $10 million to small community programs that have no full time paid staff.

Backed by strong traditions, they value youth and rely heavily on informal educational methods. Their programs and activities span a range of competencies and include sports and recreation, community service, problem prevention, and science and math education. The practices and strategies used in delivering these services reflect an understanding of young people's basic physical and social needs. What's more, they emphasize challenging youth and acknowledging their achievements.

Not all of these nonprofits are youth development organizations in the sense that they have created environments in which youth can work to meet their personal and social needs and develop and array of comptencies. But many are. Furthermore, the philosophy, operational flexibility and commitment of these organizations as a group, makes them prime candidates for becoming central places with central people for youth whose needs have not been adequately met at home or in school. The following four examples are just a few of the many programs widely recognized by practitioners and program planners as exemplary. They range from a large multi-service agency to an alternative school for youth with emotional and behavioral problems. While clearly different in the services offered, all the programs emphasize a development-focused strategy which respects and promotes the potential and competence of youth:

### The Door, A Center of Alternatives

*"Right now I feel like The Door is where I'm learning to fly."*
- Linda, 19

*"When we give them (teens) successful experiences, for instance in the arts, their self-definition becomes, 'I'm the person who just accomplished such-and-such. Yeah, I may have a problem at home or in school, but that's not all I am.' We don't label kids, and they don't feel like a walking problem when they come here."*
-Ophie Franklin, Executive Director

*"The Door flies in the face of how the world is organized. There were a lot of people who told us, 'You can't organize across disciplines.' Was it hard to do? Yes, but we proved it could be done."*
- Julie Glover, Associate Director, The Door

The Door, A Center for Alternatives, has created a unique environment for young people which is intentionally youth-centered. Founded in 1972 by the International Center for Integrative Studies (ICIS), the Door was established to meet the needs of New York City's neediest young people and to test the effectiveness of providing several services in an integrated way. Today it is the most comprehensive cultural, mental health, vocational, education, and health center in the United States, drawing 6,000 teenagers annually. While most of these youth are poor and disadvantaged, any young person may use the more than thirty coordinated services and programs.

Aside from its impressive reach and size, the Door is distinctive in the opportunities it provides and the way in which they are provided. It is a walk-in, no-fee source for help. Services are integrated through collaborative planning and program development. With the assistance of a large cadre of volunteers, the Door offers comprehensive services including medical care and legal consultation, drug rehabilitation, employment aid, meals, and creative aids and classes that range from martial arts to English. Because of its integrative approach to services, young people interact with a host of professionals within a single facility. This includes physicians, lawyers, teachers, job developers, counselors, nutritionists, athletic coaches, and artists. Indeed, the key to the Door is complete coordination of services with interdisciplinary staff supervision at all times. Each staff member is alert to the many issues a youngster may be facing and strives to treat the whole person. Every doctor, lawyer, and teacher at the Door, including the wrestling coach and pottery instructor, is a trained counselor.

**STANDING APART FROM THE OTHERS**

Programs that are explictly committed to helping young people build the full range of necessary competencies and meet the needs so critical to the development of confidence and commitment to others stand apart from those designed to simply fix problems. Dorothy Stoneman, President of Youthbuild, suggests that programs must have the following positive elements:

- *profound respect for the youth involved in them*
- *power for youth over their immediate environment*
- *offer protection from disaster*
- *meaningful and important work*
- *real, patient caring for youth's development*
- *actual teaching of skills*
- *consistently positive values*
- *family-like support and appreciation from peers and adults*
- *understanding of the proud and unique history of their people*
- *a path to future opportunity*
- *real concern and action from the agency about changing the conditions that have affected youth and the people they love.*

## El Puente

*"I have alot that I can teach other people and that gives me a sense of pride...it gives me a sense of confidence because there is something I can give. I'm not just a sponge, soaking up everything that everyone, if they feel inclined, can give me."*
- Maribel Lizardo, Dance Teacher, NYU student and former El Puente youth member

*"We had almost every indicator of what we would call a problem society in the Southside. But it wasn't one issue...It wasn't about pregnancy; it wasn't about education; it wasn't about criminality. It was not about the fact that maybe 65% of this community is on some form of public assistance. It was about the fact that young people were not being supported to develop. It was as simple as that. That there was no focus support for their development in this community. That the adults of the greater society had forfeited their responsibility and had in a sense looked the other way...[At El Puente] we don't tell them to come if you're about to drop out or come because you may be a teenage pregnancy problem or come if you want to prevent yourself from going to jail. These are all negatives--at risk notions that really belittle our community and our people. We say, 'come to be fully human, to develop, to contribute to New York City.' "*
- Luis Garden-Acosta, Executive Director

Established in 1983 by Luis Garden-Acosta, El Puente is a multi-service youth program which, within a holistic framework, focuses on all aspects of young people's lives: health education, achievement, personal, and social growth. The organization describes itself as a "holistic center for growth and empowerment." "El Puente" means bridge in Spanish and refers to the nearby Williamsburg Bridge. More important it symbolizes the goal of providing a bridge from adolescence to adulthood and from dependency to self-empowerment and self-esteem. The organization also seeks to create a bridge for the various Hispanic groups in the area into the wider society and out of economic impoverishment.

El Puente's work with youth emphasizes empowerment. Upon arriving at the organization, youth are asked to develop a "total person plan" which outlines how they plan to use the agency's services and what they hope to achieve. Young people are actively involved in all operations of El Puente from program planning and design to actual implementation. Trained as peer counselors, they assist with discussion groups and counseling. Youth also teach classes in music, aerobics, and dance and serve as receptionists and maintenance workers.

El Puente offers services in three designated areas: social medicine, arts, and social health. This includes recreation, academic enrichment, health, family planning, and career education. While services are free, it is expected that all young people involved will contribute to El Puente and to the community.

## YouthBuild USA

*"Leadership can engage young people intensely and deeply, liberating their best energies."*
-Dorothy Stoneman, President, YouthBuild

*"There is no socially responsible, productive, and connected role for young people in most societies, certainly not in the United States: few jobs, no real policy-making leadership, no*

*positions of political power, no high expectations of young people's contribution to society."*
-John Bell, "The Role of Adults in Developing Youth leaders", YouthBuild

YouthBuild USA was first developed by the Youth Action Program of the East Harlem Block Nursery. The Youth Action Program was established in 1978 to work with youth in designing and implementing community improvement projects. These projects include housing rehabilitation, park construction, reclamation of two community centers, crime prevention patrols, residences for homeless youth, and a variety of other projects.

In 1988, the founder of the Youth Action Program, Dorothy Stoneman, established YouthBuild, with Boston slated as the first of several sites. YouthBuild trains young people 17 to 24 to rehabilitate abandoned buildings to accommodate low-income and homeless people. Participants engage in general construction work and learn basic carpentry, electrical, and plumbing skills. Academic and vocational skills are imparted through a self-contained education (GED) and vocational training lasting one year. Youthbuild also offers counseling, academic classes, and recreational and cultural activities.

Critical to Youthbuild's operation is the emphasis on leadership. The organization believes that many young people are impoverished and powerless. They live in a society that, although affluent and greatly influenced by power and wealth, fails to accord youth respect or opportunities to participate or contribute. Furthermore, it has failed to protect most young people from drugs and violence. For this reason, Youthbuild teaches skills in decision-making, speaking, group facilitation, and negotiating.

YouthBuild has been written into federal law in the National Youth and Community Service Act, and eight million dollars has been authorized for YouthBuild programs to be administered by ACTION. In addition to Boston, there are YouthBuild sites in Tallahassee, Cleveland, San Francisco, and three in New York City. Several more will be established in the coming year.

## City Lights

*"To me success is when I see a kid walk in here and they can hold their head up and say, 'I'm worth something'....The expectations that they hold themselves to become higher."*
- Robin Keys, Caseworker, City Lights, Washington Post 10/88.

*"An important underlying principle of our day treatment program is the belief that education is therapeutic and therapy is education; therefore the boundary between these two program components is intentionally blurred."*
- Judith Tolmach Silber, Founding Director

*"I'm just trying to work hard to get up there..Being as I ain't been to school in five years, its kind of exciting doing the work."*
- Lena, 20, speaking about her efforts to move up from an eighth grade academic level

City Lights gets its name from a 1931 Charlie Chaplin movie about a victimized man's struggle to survive and foster love for a flower girl. City Lights evolved from a class action suit against the District of Columbia Department of Human Services for not providing sufficient community based

## KEY FACTS ABOUT FOUR PROGRAMS THAT WORK

**THE DOOR, A CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVES**

✓ Integrated and comprehensive services spanning the arts, health care, counseling and education.

✓ Open to all youth regardless of social or economic background.

✓ Exposure to a variety of professionals and mentors.

✓ Philosophies: Avoid labelling teens; encourage holistic.

**EL PUENTE**

✓ Widespread, integral involvement of youth in program development and implementation.

✓ Individual short term and long range plans for each youth.

✓ Philosophies: Move from dependency to self-empowerment; "you may have a problem, but you're not a problem kid."

**YOUTHBUILD USA**

✓ Alternative education linked with development of marketable skills.

✓ Dual approach of promoting youth participation and leadership and providing housing for low-income and homeless persons.

✓ Philosophies: Youth are consistently mistreated by society. Young people can be leaders; leadership best engages hearts and energies of young people.

**CITY LIGHTS SCHOOL**

✓ Unique strategy of combining psychosocial therapy with classroom instruction.

✓ Integrated computer managed system of lessons guiding youth in academics and living skills.

✓ Use of retired professionals as volunteers or "grandparents".

✓ Philosophies: Self-sufficiency, achieving the highest possible degree of productivity.

treatment for adolescents in the city's custody.

Recognized as a "best-practice" model for mental health care, City Lights is an unusual day treatment program that links therapy with classroom instruction. Pivotal to the operation is intensive personal attention and a supportive network of teachers, counselors, and peers. The youth are faced with multiple problems, often including emotional, behavioral, educational, and vocational difficulties. They are taught but they are also prepared for work and life. A three-pronged approach consists of academics, counseling, and vocational training and placement. City Lights uses a computer education program within a therapeutic setting. The curriculum allows students to advance at their own pace and addresses not only academic skills but life skills such as budgeting and nutrition. Students also receive a variety of counseling including individual and group therapy, family counseling, music and art therapy, and substance abuse prevention and treatment.

Despite their apparent differences, these programs demonstrate that youth development is a philosophy which can be applied in all programs and services. Equally important, they exemplify how the goal of youth **development** can successfully serve youth labelled as "at-risk" and viewed as primarily in need of **treatment**. Dozens of other examples can be offered. Some, like the Shiloh Baptist Church Male Youth Project, here in Washington D.C., are sponsored by religious organizations. Others, like Fifth Ward Enrichment Program in Houston, Texas, are offered in school during the school day. Still others, like Midnight Basketball League in Chicago, are sponsored by the Housing Authority.

Schools, religious organizations, housing and community development organizations, direct service nonprofits, and businesses exist in almost all communities. Insufficient attention has been paid to the identification and development of their combined capacity to offer young people the opportunities, structures, and concrete supports and services they need to bring purpose to their present lives as they prepare for their futures.

## MOVING THE VISION

We know what is needed. What works, for all types of youth, in all types of communities, is sustained and demonstrated commitment to helping youth set and achieve positive, meaningful goals. Our commitment cannot be naive -- many young people have real problems and face grave risks. These must be addressed. But full commitments must be made to every youth in this country. As soon as we suggest that the most we expect from a significant proportion of our youth is that they become "problem-free", we have undermined our ability to gain their attention and their respect. We have given them permission to turn elsewhere for structure and standards.

There is an urgent need to reexamine the current array of policies and services that address youth. More must be done. The first step, however, must be to define the vision. Teachers, program directors, parents, community leaders, researchers, policymakers, and youth themselves must be actively engaged in *defining outcomes, amassing evidence, and outlining strategies*. We have to make youth development as real as youth problems. We have to make the positive rhetoric -- that we want our youth to be good parents, good workers, good citizens -- reality.

*Having established goals in education and health, the federal government should now lead the country in discussing and establishing a broader, integrated set of goals for youth that reflect the outcomes parents, teachers, employers, citizens* ***and youth themselves*** *consider important. Youth must be fully engaged in this process.*

Once agreed upon, these outcomes must be monitored through the national data collection systems. Today, the information available on the negative activities youth engage in vastly outnumbers that on the positive. We know how many youth use drugs, but do we know how many volunteer? how many have the skills to make sound decisions? how many know about and are working toward career goals? how many have been leaders?

*The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, the National Educational Longitudinal Survey of 1988, the High School and Beyond Survey and other national surveys should be expanded to include much more extensive and consistent questions on youth's non-school activities and interests, their family commitments, their knowledge of, need for and use of public and private services and supports, and their opinions about what is needed to improve their schools, neighborhoods, lives. In addition, we have no systematic way of capturing the achievements and concerns of young people who are in vulnerable settings -- foster care, juvenile homes, mental institutions. Not having their voices allows the assumption that they are different to go unchallenged. The federal government must make a commitment to not only count but also survey these vulnerable youth.*

There are organizations, programs and people across the country who are delivering what our youth -- even our most vulnerable youth -- need. Their knowledge, activities and achievements, however, have not been adequately documented. The best prevention and intervention programs are, as just illustrated, what we would call youth development programs. Similarly, the best transitional programs for young people already in the public child-serving systems are youth development programs. While recognizing the problems that young people have, both expect young people to participate, to achieve, and to contribute. But the true power and impact of these programs is lost when they are evaluated only on their ability to reduce problems. The genuine accomplishments are overlooked when programs are documented only in terms of curricula used and numbers served.

The federal government must make a commitment to establish the expectation and partially underwrite the cost of building an overlapping system of services for youth that fills the void that exists between expensive out-of-home treatments and private, fee-for-service enrichment and development programs. In addition to taking leadership in establishing a new vision for youth, the federal government can play a significant role in reshaping the array of services available.

We urge this Committee to take the following steps:

- ***Address the inadequacy of prevention and transition services entering or leaving the child-serving systems.*** *The effectiveness of early intervention and transitional services for youth entering or leaving the child welfare, juvenile justice, and health (substance abuse) and mental health systems has been documented, but these services are still unavailable to many youth who need them.*

- ***Explore the adequacy of youth development services for those youth within the child-serving systems.*** *Once in the systems, the educational, health, and broader development needs of youth are often ignored as is their need for ongoing treatment. Consequently, problems often intensify rather than improve. Guidelines and incentives should emphasize the importance of plans for the treatment and broader development of young people in these systems.*

- ***Document the existence and effectiveness of policies and programs that connect the treatment-focused child-serving systems with those that reach all youth.*** *Exemplary strategies that create program and staffing overlaps between the systems of institutionally based or funded transitional services and those public and private systems that serve all youth should be documented and replicated. These include partnerships/ collaborations with schools, housing authorities, parks and recreation, health, and direct-service non-profits and businesses. Most promising are efforts that do not address youth problems on an individual case basis, but seek to identify broader interventions that can change the environments that contribute to individual problems.*

- ***Assess the impact and efficacy of developing and supporting single-problem funding categories (pregnancy prevention, substance abuse prevention, AIDS prevention) for community-based prevention efforts.*** *Categorical prevention dollars are placing multi-service, youth development programs in jeopardy. We must find ways to support the expansion of programs that offer targeted, time-limited prevention curricula or intervention services within ongoing youth development programming.*

- ***Examine the cost and impact of funding politically safe programs that admonish youth to stay away from drugs, sex, violence*** *but do not offer opportunities to discuss these risks fully and to engage in real problem-solving and life planning.*

Finally, we urge this Committee to recognize publicly, not only exemplary youth and exemplary programs, but exemplary communities. As communities across the country cry out that our youth are at risk, we must ask an important question: Are we trying to build better youth to ensure the support and safety of our communities, or are we trying to build better communities to ensure the support and safety of our young people? It simply is not enough to devise complex community strategies to prevent harmful behaviors, like substance abuse or delinquency. We must be equally adamant about defining and promoting positive goals that we, the families of young people, and youth themselves hope to achieve. Our strategies for preparing youth for parenthood, for example, must be as detailed and aggressive as those for helping youth avoid pregnancy.

The Center for Youth Development and Policy Research -- a new center established by the Academy for Educational Development in Washington, D.C. -- is working with many organizations and communities across the country to define and promote positive goals for youth and offer communities concrete examples and implementation strategies. This Committee could play an invaluable role in this process by expressing urgency in finding ways to identify, document and support those communities that are aiming to become better places for young people to develop and that are insisting that youth play an active role in their reshaping.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Marilyn Evans, we welcome you. We are very interested in hearing how you are doing with your project of Kids Voting. Your statement will be placed in the record.

**STATEMENT OF MARILYN EVANS, PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KIDS VOTING, USA, MESA, AZ**

Ms. EVANS. "Kids Voting created political monsters out of the children of Arizona." Stated with great pride and joy, this was the refrain of parents across Arizona last fall.

Kids Voting was created due to low voter turnout generally, and especially of young adults. In the 1990 Presidential election, only 33 percent of eligible 18-to-24-year-olds went to the polls. This age group votes at less than a 10-percent level in State and local elections.

We have missed the boat with this new generation; and significantly increased apathy is occurring with each decade for the older generations. Therefore, Kids Voting was developed and instituted, a concept borrowed from Costa Rica, a fine democratic nation with an exceptional record of citizen participation.

This is the way Kids Voting worked in Arizona during the fall of 1990: one, 95 percent of students grades K-12 (about 700,000) received 6 to 12 hours of curriculum lessons about voting, and then went to the polls with their parents. It was offered to every school district without charge.

Early grade students discussed such topics as the concept of leadership qualities that good leaders should have. They discussed the concept of one person, one vote. Intermediate students discussed additional topics, e.g., the process of voting, how to obtain information about candidates and ballot propositions.

The high school students talked additionally about evaluating campaign literature and ads, how to listen to campaign debates and make judgments about the results of political decisions on their lives. They became so-called registered voters.

On Election Day, they accompanied their parents to polling places and voted on the Kids Voting ballot. They made decisions about the same candidates and issues as their parents. Actually, over 131,000 children accompanied their parents to the polls.

Third graders and below did not have to read the portions of their ballot. They could choose pictures of candidates and symbols. The ballot increased in complexity, so that the high school kids were voting on the same State issues and candidates, and legislative and Congressional candidates as their parents.

So, on the day of election, over 100,000 children in Arizona showed up at the polls accompanied by their parents. An additional almost 31,000 children dragged their parents to the polls, a reverse peer pressure. These adults indicated that they would not have become registered and voted had it not been for Kids Voting.

So, in 1800 precincts, on November 6, 1990, adults were voting in one side of precincts and children in the other side. It was thrilling in these precincts. The majority of the ballots were tabulated and the results given to the media.

When the citizens of Arizona read their newspapers the day after the election, the headline story was of the official results, but the student vote was prominently presented also.

And how did the students vote? They mirrored the adult vote for 24 items—State, Congressional, legislative offices and ballot propositions—but differed for three items: they would have narrowly elected the Democratic candidate for Governor; they would have passed an education funding proposition and they would have passed the Martin Luther King holiday three to one.

Citizens of Arizona were intrigued with the student vote results. Therefore, students felt their opinion was and is valued, that children are an important element in our society.

However, students experienced much more than lessons about voting, acquiring skills and then voting. They were encouraged to be creative:

1. They debated issues within the classroom.

2. They interviewed and often debated with candidates brought to their schools. The PBS station affiliated in Phoenix had 100 children come to the station and debate in a Donahue-style format the candidates for Governor and superintendent of public instruction. At one time, the Democratic candidate for Governor said he felt there should be a 12-month school year. The students almost booed this man out of the room. He sent a press release to the schools thereafter saying he thought the school building should be open for 12 months. The candidates were interested in the opinion of the children.

3. They developed through their student governments their own local issue to be decided by their vote on the ballot.

4. They became student reporters for their newspapers and sometimes local community newspapers.

5. They became media reporters during the night of the election, relating their impression of the student vote as the results became available.

6. They developed plays about voting, older students performing for younger students. Usually the villain was the non-voter.

7. They established competition among schools for voter turnout.

8. They served as poll workers in precincts.

9. They tabulated results on election night.

Additionally, outside of the classroom and school, the adults as parents and members of the community became exceptionally involved:

1. At home, 77 percent of parents indicated their children initiated discussion about the 1990 candidates and ballot propositions. This created the political monsters; the parents could not stop debate and were expected to defend their stands on candidates and issues. This discussion at home is a key positive result of Kids Voting. The homework given these children is a key part of the program also.

2. Because of their special needs, the county along the Mexico border had a ceremony making all the non-U.S. students citizens for the day, so that they could vote, too.

3. 21,000 adults were registered as voters in McDonald's restaurants across the State on one Saturday.

4. Ten thousand volunteers worked on the project, mainly on the day of the election, to assist the children in precincts.

5. Kids Voting was featured routinely in county parades and fairs and hundreds of local events.

6. Newspaper stories averaged nine per day in State and local papers during a 10-week period of time, because it was a great story and a nonpartisan event to increase voter turnout. Also three to four hours of broadcast and radio coverage occurred.

7. In the private sector, 65 corporations provided cash and in-kind donations; the project was funded privately at the 95-percent level.

What is the value of Kids Voting?

1. Increases adult voter turnout, nearly 3 percent in the first statewide experience and nearly 5 percent in the pilot area, experiencing the program twice.

2. Educates children about the responsibility of voting, while setting high expectations as they develop skills for making informed political decisions.

3. Demonstrates to children that their opinion is valued.

4. Encourages communities to work together for the sake of their children and welfare of democracy.

5. Allows adults to feel renewed as citizens while watching these budding citizens seriously study their ballot and make independent choices. We had story after story of 5–6 year-olds coming into the precincts and their parents saying, "Let me help you fill out your ballot," and they say, "Oh, no, Mom. You vote all by yourself."

6. Brings parents into the school system; 69 percent of school superintendents indicated this result occurred.

7. Gives adults an additional perspective of candidates as they observe a politician's response to a child's inquiry. I will give you an example:

Research proves that beyond party affiliation, adults choose candidates on the basis of trust and sensitivity. When a 6-year-old rocks back on his heels and asks of a six-foot-tall candidate, "What will you do to make my world safe, Mr. Goddard?", the candidate's directness and sensitivity of response is as telling for the public as the response to the most sophisticated questioning of the top journalists.

I think the Arizona adults would say that the greatest hope of Kids Voting is that in the year 2004, when Arizona's 1990 kindergarten class turns 18 and has had the chance to vote in seven elections, these young adults will become registered and vote at an 80 percent to 90 percent level as they do in Costa Rica, the nation providing this wonderful model.

We thank you and hope that we will be working in each of your states at some point in time to establish Kids Voting.

[Prepared statement of Marilyn Evans follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARILYN EVANS, PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KIDS VOTING, USA, MESA, AZ

"Kids Voting created political monsters of our children!" Stated with great pride and joy, this was the refrain of parents across Arizona last fall.

Kids Voting was created due to low voter turnouts generally and especially of young adults: in the 1990 statewide elections nationally, only 16% of eligible 18-24 year olds went to the polls. This age group votes at less than a 10% level in state and local elections.

We have missed the boat with this new generation of voters, and significantly increased apathy is occurring with each decade for the older generations.

Therefore, Kids Voting was developed and instituted, a concept borrowed from Costa Rica, a fine democratic nation with an exceptional record of citizen participation. Voter turnout in this country is approximately 90% for every election. Children of grades K-12 study the voting process, discuss current elections with their parents and then vote beside their parents in polls on election day.

This is the way Kids Voting worked in Arizona during the fall of 1990:

1. 95% of students grades K-12 (about 700,000) received 6-12 hours of curriculum lessons about voting. (Kids Voting was offered without charge to all school districts.)

Kindergartners through early grade students discussed such topics as:

...Concept of leadership and qualities good leaders should have

...Principle of one person and one vote

Intermediate students discussed such topics as:

...History of voting

...Process of voting

...Obtaining information about candidates and ballot propositions

High school students discussed such topics as:

...Evaluating campaign literature and media advertising

...Evaluating candidate debates and making judgments

...Results of political decisions and the related impact on their lives

2. Then the students became "registered voters".

3. The children studied the sample ballots in the classroom.

...The ballot was developed for all children, thirty different ballots for the thirty legislative districts.

...Early elementary children could choose pictures and symbols instead of needing to read names and titles.

...The ballot increased in complexity as the students' developmental level increased.

...High school students voted on all of the state candidates, races and propositions; plus, all student governments were encouraged to develop a local issue, represented on the ballot.

...High school students also expressed their view on the Arizona issue "No pass, No drive" (and passed it!).

4. On November 6, Election Day, the students accompanied their parents to precinct polling places and voted on our Kids Voting Ballot, making decisions about the same candidates and issues as their parents.

...Actually, over 100,000 children accompanied their parents to the polls,

...But an additional 30,000 children dragged their parents to the polls, a reverse peer pressure. (These adults indicated that they would not have become registered and voted had it not been for Kids Voting.)

...Therefore, in 1800 precincts, adults were voting in one side of precincts and children in the other side. The atmosphere was very thrilling and upbeat.

5. The majority of the 131,000 ballots were tabulated that night and results given to the media.

6. When the citizens of Arizona read their newspapers the day after the election, the headline story was of the official results but the student vote was prominently presented also.

And how did the students vote? They mirrored the adult vote for 24 items (state, congressional, legislative offices and ballot propositions) but differed for three items:

...They would have narrowly elected the Democratic candidate for Governor.

...They would have passed an education funding proposition.

...They would have passed the Martin Luther King Holiday, three to one.

Citizens of Arizona were intrigued with the student vote results. Therefore, students felt that their opinion was and is valued, that children are an important element in our society.

However, students experienced much more than lessons about voting, acquiring skills and then voting. They were encouraged to be creative:

...They debated issues within the classroom.

...They interviewed and often debated with candidates brought to their schools or at special events. The candidates responded well to these student debate opportunities.

For instance, the P.B.S. station in Phoenix produced two one hour segments of one-hundred children questioning the candidates for governor and superintendent of public instruction. At one point, a governor candidate mentioned that school should occur on a twelve month basis. Because the young audience was not pleased with this suggestion, his campaign sent press releases to all schools qualifying his position: "the school buildings should be utilized twelve months per year."

...They developed through their student governments their own local issue to be decided by their vote on the ballot.

...They became student reporters for their newspapers and sometimes local community newspapers.

...They became media reporters during the night of the election, relating their impression of the student vote as the results became available.

...They developed plays about voting, older students performing for younger students. (Usually the villain was the non-voter.)

...They established competition among schools for voter turnout.

...They served as poll workers in precincts.

...They tabulated results on election night.

Additionally, outside of the classroom and school, the adults as parents and members of the community became exceptionally involved:

...At home, 77% of parents indicated their children initiated discussion about the 1990 candidates and ballot propositions. (This created the political monsters; the parents could not stop their children's debate and were expected to defend their stands on candidates and issues.) This discussion at home is a key positive result of Kids Voting.

...Also all counties had Kids Voting boards resulting in a flurry of creative activities:

***Santa Cruz county, along the Mexican-American border, had a ceremony making all non-U.S. children citizens for the day, allowing them to vote in the precincts although their parents could not vote.

***21,000 adults were registered as voters in McDonald's restaurants across the state on one Saturday with the assistance of voter registrars of the Arizona Republican and Democratic Party.

***10,000 volunteers worked on the project, mainly on the day of the election to assist the children in precincts.

***Kids Voting was featured routinely in county parades and fairs and hundreds of local events.

***Newspaper stories averaged nine per day in state and local papers during a 10 week period; also 3-4 hours of broadcast and radio coverage occurred. Kids Voting was a good story and well-respected by the media professionals as non-partisan.

***65 corporations provided cash and inkind donations; the project was funded privately at the 95% level.

What Is The Value of Kids Voting?

1. Increases adult voter turnout, nearly 3% in the first statewide experience and nearly 5% in the pilot area, which has experienced the program twice

2. Educates children about the responsibility of voting while setting high expectations as they develop skills for making informed political decisions

3. Demonstrates to children that their opinion is valued

4. Encourages communities to work together for the sake of their children and welfare of democracy

5. Allows adults to feel renewed as citizens while watching these budding citizens seriously study their ballot and make independent choices

6. Brings parents into the school system; 69% of school superintendents indicated this result occurred.

7. Gives adults an additional perspective of candidates as they observe a politician's response to a child's inquiry

Research proves that beyond party affiliation, adults choose candidates on the basis of trust and sensitivity. When a 6 year old rocks back on his heels and asks of a 6 foot tall candidate, "What will you do to make my world safe, Mr. Goddard?", the candidate's directness and sensitivity of response is as telling for the public as the response to the most sophisticated questioning of the top journalists.

Was Kids Voting Supported by the citizens of Arizona?

1. A statewide poll of registered voters conducted by Arizona State University occurred a few days after the election:

...92% were aware of the program and 91% felt it was worthwhile

...6% stated Kids Voting was one factor for voting; 3% indicated Kids Voting was the only reason for voting.

...90% who were parents indicated their children were enthusiastic about Kids Voting, 77% stated their children initiated discussion at home about the 1990 candidates and ballot propositions and 95% want it continued in the schools.

2. Surveys of teachers revealed the following:

...94% thought the program was worthwhile

...88% indicated Kids Voting should continue; the prime reason for this support is because it brought "energy" into the classroom

3. Surveys of school district administrators revealed the following:

...100% indicated that student knowledge of elections increased

...97% stated that student enthusiasm for elections increased

...69% indicated that Kids Voting increased parental involvement in schools

...rated the curriculum fair to excellent, 75% by high school teachers and 92% by elementary teachers

4. Survey of students revealed:

...91% indicated Kids Voting should continue

...67% stated that Kids Voting caused them to discuss voting with their parents frequently or occasionally

The greatest hope of Kids Voting is for the year of 2004, when Arizona's 1990 kindergarten class turns eighteen and have experienced seven Kids Voting elections. We hope that these young adults will become registered and vote at an 80-90% level as they do in Costa Rica, the nation providing us with this wonderful model for Arizona and the United States.

Thank you Madame Chairwoman Schroeder and your committee members for your interest in Kids Voting. We hope to implement the program in every district in the near future.

KIDS VOTING

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## KIDS VOTING RESEARCH & POLLING RESULTS SUMMARY
## 1990
## CONDUCTED BY
## BRUCE MERRILL, PH.D., A.S.U.*

1. Polling results of Arizona's registered voters:

   A. 92% are aware of Kids Voting.
   B. Of the 92% aware, 91% have a favorable impression.
   C. 6% indicated Kids Voting was a factor influencing them to vote; **nearly 3% indicated it was the only reason for voting.**
   D. 77% of registered voters with children in school indicated their children initiated discussions at home about this year's candidate races and ballot propositions.
   E. Parents stated that 90% of their children were enthusiastic about Kids Voting.
   F. 95% of parents recommended that Kids Voting be continued at their children's schools.

2. Polling results of Arizona's teachers:

   A. 94% indicated program is worthwhile.
   B. 88% indicated program should be continued.
   C. 90% indicated program should be nationwide.

3. Polling results of Arizona's students (grades 4 - 12):

   A. 81% indicated that it is important to vote.
   B. 67% indicated that they discussed voting frequently or occasionally because of Kids Voting.
   C. 89% indicated the program is very worthwhile.
   D. 91% indicated Kids Voting should be continued.
   E. 91% indicated program should be nationwide.

4. Turnout increased:

   A. Nearly 3% across Arizona, resulting in 29,000 additional voters.
   B. An additional 2% in 1988 pilot area, indicating total turnout for two elections of an additional 5%.

* For a copy of the complete research document, call or write: Kids Voting, 604 West McKellips Rd., Mesa, AZ 85201, (602) 969-5046.

**Survey Results - School District Administration**

The following results were obtained from surveys given to school district superintendents and Kids Voting coordinators, (school district staff members) for the Arizona 1990 program:

*92% - an overall favorable impression of the program

*100% - increased student knowledge of elections

*97% - increased student enthusiasm for learning about elections

*69% - resulted in increased parental involvement in school

*82% - Kids Voting staff administered program well

*94% - should be expanded to other schools

*92% - should be utilized in other states

*98% - K-3 grade curriculum rated as excellent or good

*98% - 4-8 grade curriculum rated as excellent or good

*97% - 9-12 grade curriculum rated as excellent or good

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. I hope so, too. That is a wonderful story. Thank you so much for telling us about.

Mark Simon, we welcome you, and we have your testimony, which again we will put in the record. So you can summarize, however you would like, and the floor is yours.

**STATEMENT OF MARK SIMON, SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER, BETHESDA-CHEVY CHASE HIGH SCHOOL, BETHESDA, MD**

Mr. SIMON. Thank you very much, Congresswoman Schroeder, and Members of the Committee.

Thank you for including the perspective of a classroom teacher in your hearing today.

I was tremendously moved by the student ambassadors on the panel before us. These are exceptional kids, but I would like to just suggest that their stories are not unusual and that it often begins or ends in school.

You have my statement for the record. I have taught high school for the past 18 years. I have been the President of my NEA Local of 7000 teachers. I am currently on the NEA Board of Directors.

None of that is why I am here. I want to just talk with you briefly about Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School today, the school where I teach, because I think that in a lot of ways, what is going on at B-CC is a microcosm of something that is taking place in the country as a whole.

The difference is that we are fortunate to have some programs at B-CC that many schools have to do without.

I would like to try and communicate how important these programs are to the kids that we are trying to challenge and inspire. There are nine students who are here from B-CC. I would like them just to raise their hands.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Good.

Mr. SIMON. Tney are in our tenth grade government class, so this is a special experience for them.

B-CC has changed dramatically in the past 20 years, from a predominantly white upper middle-class homogeneous school to one in which 61 percent of our students are white, 21 percent African-American, 12 percent are Hispanic, 5 percent are Asian, one-half of 1 percent are Native American.

Students come from 60 countries and speak 30 languages. Twenty-five percent of the students are in our ESL Program for nonEnglish speakers, and half of those are on the free or reduced lunch program.

So the school includes students whose families have gone to Harvard and Yale for generations and also increasing numbers of students who have arrived fresh from the streets of El Salvador or Southeast Asia.

So, in this relatively privileged school, we are struggling to keep up with demographic changes. In preparing to talk with you today, I spoke with students and with teachers.

When I asked about issues that concern students, a lot of the kinds of things that came up today came up—issues of students needing to be respected for their opinions, needing to be more a part of the real world while in school, issues around the tracking of

students and the problems that occur because of what students perceive as unfairness in academic tracking, the need for a variety of role models, particularly more African-American and Hispanic teachers in school, the need for factual, honest information about sex and drugs, not the propaganda that they are disbelieving of.

Faculty members, when asked about programs that have made a particular difference, pointed to so many programs that have made a difference that I am tempted to conclude that the key is having the diversity of programs within which students can find a niche.

In my written testimony I talked about several programs, the community service program, the leadership, and social studies lab programs.

I would like to just briefly touch on two other programs, one social and one academic. Socially, high school students tend to seek out comfortable peer social groups, and a diverse student body can be factionalized into cliques.

And it has been very important for the staff to make efforts to continue to try and create opportunities for students to interact across the social categories of race, ethnicity and socio-economic backgrounds so that all students can feel that they belong.

We have a rec club program at the school and, in my opinion, that rec club which an individual staff member keeps going, has played a tremendous role in bridging the gap between social backgrounds of kids and has helped create a friendly atmosphere at the school.

More specifically, on the academic front, we started a program last year of double-period algebra and double-period geometry. This is a significant program because, rather than tracking students into algebra for smart kids and basic math for the, quote, dummies, like we used to, we have instituted the expectation that all students should take algebra and geometry.

Recognizing that some students are going to have a harder time with the algebra or the geometry than others, we offer those students a second period of related math that allows them more time for additional practice and remediation.

It works. There were more Hispanic students who got A's and B's in algebra this year than there were Hispanic students who took those courses last year.

It has particularly made a difference to minority students. The programs that I described in my written testimony exist within the philosophical context of multi-culturalism and high expectations of all students that has become current in the Montgomery County public schools.

The programs are supported by the School Board and the new Superintendent, but the programs are initiated by individual faculty members.

There are two trends nationally that I think could jeopardize the programs that I have described, and the enthusiasm that causes teaches to inspire and reach out beyond the boundaries of the classes that they teach.

One trend is the tendency to replace real support for public education with centralized top-down mandates and expanded student testing.

The other is the lack of financial support for education at the Federal level and the unwillingness or inability at the state and local level to allocate sufficient dollars to maintain quality programs.

Teachers' salaries were cut last year. Class sizes were increased. Money for instructional materials was cut. Sports and extra programs got the axe.

This year we expect the cuts to be just as deep as they were last year, and I would just like to ask Members of the committee if you think teachers are going to continue to be able to muster the extra enthusiasm and creativity that makes the difference between success and failure for kids if these funding cuts continue.

Many Members of the committee have spoken today in your comments to that issue, and I think it is the crucial one facing us.

I was impressed with Melissa who sat in this seat and raised that same issue of funding. It is a crisis for us nationally.

I would like to thank you, members of the committee, for your concern, for your attention, and whatever you can do to help this nation's schools, which by and large are grappling like B-CC with new challenges of increasing diversity, increasing urbanization, but without many of the programs and approaches which, by a thread, seem to be working at our school.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Mark Simon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARK SIMON, SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER, BETHESDA-CHEVY CHASE HIGH SCHOOL, BETHESDA, MD

Thank you for extending this opportunity to me to present the perspective of a high school classroom teacher to this esteemed Congressional committee. I have taught high school for the past 18 years. I've taught economics, sociology, American history, Latin American history, a course on the Black Experience in America, and now national, state and local government. I was elected three times to be president of the Montgomery County Education Association between 1985 and 1991 which put me in a position of speaking not just for myself, but for 7,000 teachers at all levels in Montgomery County. This year, my term as president has ended, and I have returned to my position in the classroom full time at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. I continue, however, to serve on the Board of Directors of the National Education Association, representing over 2,000,000 teachers who belong to the NEA.

None of that is particularly relevant to what I want to talk with you about today, however. Today, I'd like to talk with you about the changing context of education as evidenced at one suburban high school. In many ways B-CC is a microcosm of how the context of education is changing throughout the country. I'd like to talk with you about programs that are successful, that make a difference in kids' lives. B-CC's challenges and successes could be instructive to others, in part because, like B-CC, schools throughout the country are having to take on new roles as the student population becomes increasingly diverse and urbanized and students' worlds become more complex and uncertain -- all which make the fine line between success and failure so ephemeral.

I began at B-CC in 1976, and I have watched a homogeneous, relatively elite, white, upper middle class suburban school of the 1950's and 1960's become gradually transformed into an ethnically, socio-economically, racially, and nationally diverse cultural mixture. Sixty-one percent of our students are white, twenty-one percent are African American, twelve percent are Hispanic, five percent are Asian, and one-half of one percent are Native American. Students come from 60 countries and speak over 30 languages. The school includes students whose families have gone to Harvard or Yale for generations, and increasing numbers of students who have just arrived fresh from the streets of El Salvador or Southeast Asia.

B-CC works, but the atmosphere that is supportive of both academic achievement and cultural difference is extremely fragile. The school could just as easily become a nightmare of

hostilities, intolerance, and an explosion of competing agendas and unmet needs. It takes a particular kind of energy and creative programming to offer the possibility of success to all students. We don't always succeed, and our ability to maintain a successful program for most students in the future is uncertain.

In preparing to talk with you today, I spoke with students and with teachers at B-CC, and what I would like to report is not just my experience, but theirs. So much of what works with one kid is like one lock being opened with one key, and those who profess to have simple solutions or pat analyses about all kids are either liars or they're removed from the realities of young peoples' lives.

When I asked students about issues that concerned them about their school or community, they mentioned inequalities that stem from unfairness in the tracking of students into honors, regular or "basic" programs. They mentioned the need to youth to be more a part of the "real" world while in school. They talked about needing to be respected for their opinions, and the value of being pushed to work hard even when they don't want to. They talked in particular about needing many more African-American and Hispanic teachers. They talked about wanting more sports, social centers and social activities for teenagers in the community, while they recognized that they probably have more of those opportunities available than other, less wealthy jurisdictions in the country. They talked about wanting factual, honest, information about sex and drugs, not propaganda that they tend to disbelieve.

I was surprised at how tuned in kids were to the need to a multicultural approach to the structure and the content of schooling. In many ways they were much clearer than those adults who engage in the national debate on the subject.

Faculty members, when asked what programs have made a particular difference in the lives of students, were frequently quick to offer anecdotes, like Mr. Bierdron who remembers Jenifer who took his Russian history and language class five years ago. He bumped into her in a shopping mall the other day. She had a dozen Soviet visitors in tow. She was working for a government agency as a Russian studies expert. Or Mr. Mullaney, who remembered Leo who was a terror in school until he found a niche in the Rec Club, the social club that Mullaney has sponsored after school. Or Mrs. Klecan, who recalled how withdrawn and depressed Martha seemed until she got involved in the Community Service program and volunteered at the neighborhood home for the elderly.

Faculty members and students pointed to so many programs that have made a difference that I am tempted to conclude that a diversity of programs within which students can seek out their niche for success is part of the key. What these programs have in common, however, is that unique strengths and interests of faculty members were translated into an enthusiasm for a subject,

a program or a project, and both the enthusiasm and the subject were communicated to the students. It is the quality of that interaction between teacher and student that frequently causes a transformation in a student's life.

Let me give a few example of two types of programs that work. Community involvement programs are one type.

We have a number of programs that help students become involved in the community in a useful way. The Community Service program allows students to receive credit for volunteering in homeless shelters, working with the elderly, or serving as aides in local elementary schools or schools for children with physical or mental disabilities.

Our Leadership program allows students to receive credit for performing a service role within the school, tutoring peers, producing an alumni newsletter, organizing the student government, or instituting a school recycling program.

The Social Studies Lab allows students to volunteer with an organization or institution for half of every day during their senior year. Students become part of the staff of museums, hospitals, lobbying or political organizations like NOW and Environmental Action, organizations working for causes, or even staff for Congresspeople.

Participating students often report that some aspect of their community service was "the best" thing about their senior year. The key to these community action programs is that they are voluntary, they require tremendous motivation on the part of kids, they give students responsibility, and they frequently take students out of the youth ghetto and into the "real" world. These programs attract a wide range of students, not just students who are successful academically. They also have the added benefit of bringing students, teachers, and parents together in working on a community project.

The second category of programs so important to B-CC consists of supplemental remedial programs. With a diverse student population, these programs have become an alternative to rigid tracking.

Last year, we started a program of double period algebra and double period geometry. Rather than track students into algebra for "smart" kids and basic math for "the other dummies," as we used to do, we've instituted the expectation that <u>all</u> students should take algebra and geometry. Recognizing that some students are going to have a harder time with algebra or geometry than others, we offer those students a second period of "related math" that allows them more math time for additional practice, remediation, and support. In the "related algebra," students work in groups using cooperative learning techniques and they receive additional instruction and have expanded drill and

practice.

According to the accounts of teachers and students, and according to objective grade and test data, this approach works. There were more students who got A's and B's in algebra this year than there were students who took algebra at all the year before. The impact has been the greatest on the grades, participation, self-image, and future expectations of minority students.

In my randomly selected 10th grade government classes this past Friday, I asked students how many of them were taking or had taken the "related math" support class. About a quarter of the students raised their hands. By their own testimonies, many of them owe their success in algebra to the "related math" course.

Some of the enthusiasm for beginning the double-math program came from the math coordinator in the county, Joy Odum. She has encouraged several schools to begin it, but the program wasn't just implemented uniformly from the top down. The exact form it takes is different in each school that does it. The decision and the initiative to implement the double math at B-CC came from teachers and the principal who went to see the film "Stand and Deliver," en masse, five years ago. We invited the principal of Garfield High, in East Los Angeles, to talk with our staff about the experiment the film was about and what the teacher, Jaime Escalante, did to motivate kids to learn math. The rest is history.

I have not commented on other supplemental and remedial programs that are more traditional, like our extensive ESOL program for the 25% of our student population whose primary language is not English and whose cultural background is not North American. We also have extensive special education support that enables students who have been separated into self-contained special education programs in previous years to survive in the regular program now. If the level of these support programs is compromised due to budget cuts, the result will inevitably be a watered down academic program. The fact that we have been able to maintain high academic standard while mainstreaming many students is directly dependent on increasing supplemental remedial support.

The programs I have described exist within the philosophical context of multiculturalism and high expectations for all students that has become current in the Montgomery County Public Schools as a whole. The school board and new superintendent have tried to create an atmosphere that supports these programs. The particulars of the programs have been determined and are implemented by the individual faculty members at particular schools like B-CC. The programs and the energies cannot be mandated from the top down, but the resources, the support, and the respect from the top are prerequisites for good things to happen.

I would be remiss if I did not point out that the budget crunch that we are experiencing is putting many of these efforts in jeopardy. Staff enthusiasm about the subjects they are teaching, and their willingness and ability to do the extras and to reach out to students beyond the boundaries of the classes they teach, are frequently what "make a difference." Last year was a bad budget year, and it looks like unless something changes in the revenue picture, this year could be just as bad or worse. Funding has a direct impact on the extent to which teachers are going to be able to muster the extra enthusiasm and creativity that make the difference between success and failure for many kids.

The history of our school system is replete with examples of good ideas that failed because they were either implemented as top-down mandates, or without sufficient resources to make them anything but a burden to the teaching staff and students.

I would like to close with a description of a conversation with Tatiana Lapshina, a teacher who is visiting B-CC this year from the Soviet Union. She's been aware of the so-called reforms that are the trend in this country in the name of "accountability": increased uniformity in testing and measuring student outcomes against a fixed body of factual knowledge. She said, "I can't believe that your country seems to be going in a direction that we've been trying to move away from as fast as we can."

Thank you so much for your concern, your attention, and whatever you can do to help this nation's young people and their schools, which are, by and large, grappling, like B-CC, with increasing diversity and "urbanization," but without many of the programs and approaches that, by a thread, seem to be working at our school.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you all very, very much.

I want to thank the distinguished panel for telling us what is going on in your area.

Let me yield first to Congressman Frank, who got us the room. This is his room the rest of the time.

Mr. FRANK. It is the Banking Committee's room, is what she means.

I wondered if I could ask Ms. Pittman, the point you make about focusing on kids before they are in trouble obviously is an important one, and there is, particularly with the tight resources, that tendency.

What kinds of programs would you have us do from the Federal level? Given the way the constitutional structure has worked, the assumption has been that Federal intervention with youth is exceptional, that the basic needs are taken care of at state and local levels.

I don't subscribe to that, but I think that is an explanation that the Federal programs have only communicated trivially.

Ms. PITTMAN. I think there are a couple of things that can happen. First of all, one of the dangers that has occurred is that we have made this split between kids who are at risk and in trouble and kids who are okay, and moved towards a dual system of services for those young people.

We do have an enormous amount of Federal dollars in juvenile justice, in child welfare, runaway and homeless youths.

Even inside of those systems, there is much that can be done. You heard today about the Independent Living Program, within Child Welfare. That program has not been around for very long, but it made an enormous difference in the young person's life. And if you look at the kinds of things that are taught in independent living, they are really parallel to the kind of experience youth get through Scouting.

I think that we have to look at the Federal programs that we have in place, especially those that are there for quote, unquote, at-risk, high-risk troubled youth, and within them, make a priority to set goals so that we are not just helping those young people reduce their problems, we are helping them move forward.

Mr. FRANK. That is for the kids at risk. Would you have us get into programmatic things for the kids who are not at risk in that specific sense as we mean it?

Ms. PITTMAN. In communities, I think that we always have a problem of not really knowing how to move Federal or even state dollars into community programs, and the normal vehicle for doing that is through schools.

And what was just discussed is absolutely true. We have to make sure that we don't start cutting. The school really is the primary place where we can be assured that we can reach those young people who are still attending.

And I think that we need to find ways to use that vehicle, both the facilities as a service delivery and funding vehicle to make sure that we expand both the quality and the array of programs.

And so the debates about making sure that schools are open year-round, making sure that schools are open year-round, making sure that they are open longer periods of time.

And the kinds of creative things that are happening are coordinating services, using the school as a base.

Mr. FRANK. Work through the school rather than set up some alternative structure.

Ms. PITTMAN. Yes.

Mr. FRANK. And we have a very central debate that will come from now on.

I think the President started it off Friday night. The President made a speech Friday night which had many things in it which I was pleased to hear about, defusing some weapons literally.

But he also said that his view is that the military budget we adopted in October 1990—despite anything that has happened this year—must remain.

And, as a practical matter, additional funding for any of the programs that have been discussed this morning, by this panel or the prior panel, simply will not come if that holds.

We simply will not, in this country, if we maintain the military budget at the level it is now at and projected to be, have additional funding for those programs.

And so this becomes very much a set of choices for people to make. If we were simply to kill the B–2 bomber, we would free up what would be, by the standards of the programs you care about, vast sums of money, because there is so much there.

And I urge people who care about it to join the issue on those terms. We have a lot of people telling you we are all for these programs, but not one additional penny will go for these programs except for at the expense of other programs, that we won't fund special education so we can fund Pell grants.

But in terms of increasing the total amount, the debate was set on Friday night, and many of us will be on the other side of that debate than the President. And that will be determinative of what happens.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you very much.

Congressman Abercrombie.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Yes. Thank you very much.

I wanted to follow on Mr. Frank's comments, Mr. Simon. You closed your commentary with a description of a conversation with a teacher visiting from the ex-Soviet Union.

And I was struck by the fact, and I think Ms. Schroeder will confirm this for me, that I have made comments and other Members of the Congress have made comments that we seem to be going in exactly the direction that the Soviets, Russians and others in the new republics there have cast aside.

With all this testing and measuring and so on, there is one test and there is one measure, isn't there, that pen and pencil are not necessarily going to illuminate for us. And that has to do with the success, positive successes measured both in your testimony, Ms. Pittman, and then that of all the students that were here.

What I wanted to ask you, and it is a bit unfair to this panel, but what I think needs to be done—and I would like you to comment on it, is that these young people and organized associations like the NEA, have got to make it their business that the 535 members of

this Congress become the lobbyists for education and young people in this country.

If they do not, if you are unable to help in that regard, these young people are going to become very rapidly disillusioned, all due respect to what you said, Ms. Evans. There are organizations which spend millions of dollars a year to keep people here in Washington all year round to see that their special interest is undertaken.

And what I want to maintain to you, and I would like your comment on it, is do you not believe that this is not only a special interest, but the single most important special interest that we have in this country, that is to say our young people and their future, and that the only way that that future is going to be secured is if they have lobbyists in the Congress?

Mr. SIMON. I don't know if you mean specific paid lobbyists or if you mean that all of us should be there——

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. I meant securing the support more than verbal. You heard all of that this morning, and the people at this panel, I can assure you, were quite sincere about it.

But unless that is translated into dollars and cents, unless that is translated into program support, some of the positive things that you say need to be done and can be done are simply not going to occur.

Now, some of us want to change the budget priorities of this country, and while—what bothers me a little, and I hope some of the press is still here. They are all out in the hallway.

Because it is going to be a warm and fuzzy feeling on television tonight, and there will be a few reporters that go out and say look, here's this success, and yet every one of these young people today was saying that there is a vast network of people who are all alone who need some support, who need to have that sense of community.

And I am saying to you that it is not here in this Congress. There are attempts being made by the Chair of this committee and her supporters in the Congress, but we do not yet constitute a majority.

How is it possible for a Member of Congress to sit here and say we have 250 co-sponsors of a bill, but we are not sure we can get it to a vote on the Floor?

What it means is, is you have verbal acquiescence with respect to children, young people, and the future of children in this country, but no firm commitment.

And what I think—what I am trying to get at is that we need to get a firm commitment from Members of Congress with respect to this special interest, and that has to be a litmus test, if you will, for whether they are really concerned with the national security of the United States.

If our own children are not secure, if their future is not secure, how can the security of the country not be anything less than at risk?

Mr. SIMON. I couldn't agree with you more. I think that the task before us has nothing to do with warm and fuzzy. I think it has to do with shifting national priorities and that there needs to be a national campaign to shift those priorities from what half the budget

now goes to to what is not a special interest, but what is the public interest, and that is public education in this country.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. If the gentleman will yield, I think the pain that we are all feeling is that there is a group telling us we cannot touch a budget that was written for five years. And it was written at a time when the world looked very difficult.

Now, a lot of those people who tell us we cannot touch that budget, if the world had gotten as much worse as it got better, we would be insisting we break that budget open and put even more money in defense.

I mean, there is absolutely no question whether they would be. But because the world got better rather than worse, they are going to be fighting very hard to say no, no, this is sacrosanct. This is the most sacred of sacred cows.

We cannot touch it for another three years. The time limit is not up. I think that is challenging, number one. There are issues in there that we saw again Friday night.

We are sitting with 97 B-1 bombers on the ground from the last folly that don't work. And now they want to start a whole new fleet of B-2s. Now the only reason you would need B-2 bombers is if you believe the Soviet republics will send to Moscow $20 to $30 billion a year to keep upgrading their air defenses so that in ten years they will be so much more sophisticated we will have to have the B-2 if we ever figure out how to make the B-2 work, which is a big "if."

Those are the kinds of things that we are into now, and my guess is they are going to attempt to stampede us. And those are megabucks and gigabucks, and the reason the other things don't pass, everyone gets on them.

But their real push is going to still be in that direction because they are fearful, and I think that is what you are—we are saying.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Yes. I don't want these young people who have come here and presented not only testimony suffused with sincerity and deep meaning for themselves, but who have testified on behalf of literally millions of young people.

And it has been covered. You can see the dissentia, but we don't want this to end up being just another superficial sense of entertainment for the broader public and, in turn, then leave these young people feeling that they accomplished nothing at all, other than a few moments of pseudocelebrity back in their own schools or in their own communities that they were on television or they got to speak to the Congress.

The sense of concern that I have, and I realize I am singing to the choir here, but one of the things I have learned is that the choir needs to rehearse the same numbers over and over again and has to infuse every performance with the same degree of enthusiasm. Otherwise the meaning of the words and the spirit behind it gets lost.

I think that the most important thing that can come out of this hearing is if the young people, and I am speaking probably more, Mr. Simon, to the people behind you now, is that this has to be more than just a way to get out of being at your school for this morning.



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And, you know, I did the same thing, saying good, I get a chance to get out of class today.

The most important thing is that your futures are on the line, and you have got to secure just the way any other lobby group comes up here and tries to secure some allegiance from Members of Congress.

Make it a test. Whose side are you on? Are you on the side of the young people and their future in this country, or are you not?

And this is only one way to demonstrate that, it seems to me, at the congressional level.

And that is to vote to fund all of these programs that have demonstrated their practical possibilities in the local communities.

I am sure I can speak for the Chair and other Members of this committee and Congress, we have no interest in dictating from the center of the universe here in Washington as to how these programs should manifest themselves or how they should be run, or what—in what manner they should be pursued at the local level.

On the contrary. We should be catalytic. We should be facilitators here. So I just want to say that for—as a concluding remark for the record—that I hope that what comes out of this is that we will have more than ambassadors here today, that the message of these ambassadors is that we expect results from you people, that is to say us in the Congress.

You, in fact, represent us. This is a representative democracy. And if you do not represent us, then I hope, Ms. Evans, that not only in Arizona but across the country that it will be taken out on those who fail to represent the real interests of this country at the polls, and that I hope that those young people are asking, when they say, "What are you going to do to make me safe," they are going to say, "What are you going to do to make my future safe?"

I hope that you and others will urge the media to insist upon an answer from the officials who are asking for the allegiance of those young people and their parents.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Thank you very, very much.

Let me—I want to, first of all, apologize, because many of the Members went to the Floor. When that orange light goes on, the session has started, and so that is where they are. And the hearing went a little longer than we thought, so that is most unfortunate.

But one of the things that is in today's paper, and I couldn't agree with it more, is an editorial about non-leadership in areas where we need leadership.

And Mr. Simon, I think I heard you talking about this. This committee did some very intensive hearings, in fact, criticized for looking at the risky behavior of adolescents.

And, as you know, there were several surveys that were to be done about the risky behavior of adolescents in the area of health, in the area of sex, in the area of drugs. Those have all been killed now by the Congress because of their great fear.

I heard you saying kids really want to be dealt with directly. What do we do about the political tone in this country that doesn't want to deal with kids directly at all? And so the problems keep getting worse.

Mr. SIMON. Well, I think, in part, kids need to be brought into the debate. I think Ms. Evans is right about that. When I raised

the issue just a couple of days ago, actually it was in Candice's class who is sitting behind me, kids were very clear about the kind of information that they need.

And I think that, as kids are brought into the debate, they can communicate what it is that they need and what they—what kinds of things—not knowing is going to cast them to the, you know, winds of chance or to the wolves of society unless they get what they need.

So I think it is a tough political issue, you know, for you.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Is it a tough political issue for you? For example, let me give you—we had a program here called Title XX that was teaching kids things like "pet your dog, not your date"; "don't be a louse, wait for your spouse"; those types of things, telling kids not to use condoms because they get a latex reaction and so forth.

It got killed because even HHS said it was not doing what it was supposed to be doing. You were spending Federal dollars for a program that just wasn't reaching kids in the right way somehow.

It is now coming back to life, and it may be funded with money from very important family planning funds in Title X.

And I think it is part of our political fantasy of how we want to be able to deal with kids, other than on how I think you are telling me they want to be dealt with.

They would much rather be dealt with through Title X, which is the direct way of talking about it, rather than Title XX, which is the fantasy way that even the people running the program said didn't work.

But it just looks like we are about to flip it around and go the Title XX route, and that if you don't do that, it is like you are advocating promiscuity among young people.

I mean, can you talk about that in the high school, or do you, too, get in trouble? I mean, where do we have these discussions with young people to try and turn this political climate around?

Mr. SIMON. It depends on the community, obviously, and communities vary. But my experience is that kids want to be talked to and allowed to talk in discussion format. And, you know, it was Constance sitting behind me who talked about the importance of more discussion about issues that matter for kids in school.

It has to be a two-way dialog. I am not sure if that addresses the difference between Title X and Title XX. But it cannot be a lecturing sloganeering kind of cuteness message.

It has to be something that engages kids in an intellectual process about their futures, about their experience in the world. It's got to be an interactive kind of process.

And you have to trust the relationship between teacher and student, and you have to trust the relationships between students to be able to grapple with issues.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. Well, I think all of us have a real challenge in front of us to figure out how we get through this, because I really see the mood getting worse.

As the statistics get worse, we tend to turn more to dismay rather than to reality on how to deal with it. Marilyn Evans, in this voter project, did you find there was a real directness or was there a tendency to censure?

Ms. EVANS. No, I think there was real directness. Things happened the day after the election, for instance, on the Martin Luther King holiday that some Scottsdale students got together and had a press conference. And they let them know that they were incensed with the adult vote.

So they were brought into the process, I think, with real open debate. A point that I wanted to make, as there was other discussion, is that often the 18-year-olds freshly registered to vote—candidates do not speak to the issues that they are very concerned about, were concerned about when they were 16-year-olds, 14-year-olds, et cetera, because that is not a high voter turnout age group.

And we also need to reverse the dialog there from candidates so that they are speaking to that young adult group, so that they want to go to polls, they do feel like they have a stake in our democracy.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. We also don't know where to find them. You know, where do you find 18-year-olds? They are not coming to community forums and church forums. It is hard to find an institution left any more that cuts across.

Did you have something to say?

Ms. PITTMAN. Yes. I think that what we are talking about right now are various forms of what is a new buzz word out there called youth participation. And everyone is anxious now to move ahead and pull youth in since we have heard the cry that our young people are no longer invested in our society and community.

I think that youth participation is really what we are talking about, what we heard today, and is the answer to multiple things.

We have to talk about participation in the sense that we have youth fully engaged in decision-making, planning and then delivering the services or the programs.

To get to the point where we have young people sitting in this room as voting members, I think, is a far cry. But we have some things happening across the country which we are trying to promote through the Center for Youth Development. In particular, we are working in the State of Oregon to move forward with some people there who are trying to figure out in a very practical way what needs to happen to get young people actively involved in all the different ways, from decision-making to delivery of the services, and advocacy about those services, what needs to happen to move them into decision-making roles.

And what is clear is that it has been so long since we assumed that young people had a role to play that, practically, we find that people have no idea what to do. Youth participation often ends in chaos.

We say "well, turn it over to the kids." But the young people have not had training in being able to step into these roles. Adults have no idea what to do when they are not in the leadership roles, and you get chaos very quickly and everyone says, well, it didn't work.

Done correctly youth participation really is the key to what we are talking about. When we have young people participating not just as clients, not just as cheap labor, to some extent as resources, but really as agents for change, as the next generation being appropriately brought in, then we can see real things happen.

It is cost-effective. It is the best way to get them engaged, and we know from many years of experience it is the best way to get them learning and it brings a real legitimacy to the kinds of answers that we are talking about.

If we had young people effectively engaged in discussions, we wouldn't have the kinds of silly debates that were referred to about Title X versus Title XX.

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. How did you fund your voter project?

Ms. EVANS. It was funded 95 percent by corporations, 65 corporations in Arizona. The major utility company in Arizona was the major sponsor.

It was not easy to raise that money, but we are very proud of that fact. We couldn't ask the school districts, of course, to pay for the program.

We often had candidate debates in Arizona, and there were more high school students that would show up for some of those candidate debates, even though they didn't have a real vote, than there were adults.

It didn't open up——

Chairwoman SCHROEDER. That is a very good point. In my district the only place I know where to go is maybe 7-Eleven or something.

We keep saying, where do we find people to talk to, and it is hard.

Well, I, too, have to run off. We have run over today, and we have to clear the room so the poor Banking Committee can come back and clean up the banking system. Just one problem after another.

But we thank you very, very much. Any other ideas that come to mind, please let us know. The record will be open for two more weeks, if anyone has something they want to add.

And with that, we thank you for your participation and adjourn the hearing.

[Whereupon, at 12:35 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.]

[Material submitted for inclusion in the record follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LISA ROMEO, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF NEBRASKA, LINCOLN, NE

My name is Lisa Romeo from Nebraska. I represent the Foster Care Independent Living Program. During the hearing I heard two other states tell you about their Independent Living Programs. I would like to share with you how Nebraska's program may be different.

Let me begin by telling you how I got involved in this program. Because of family difficulties I made an attempt to end my life and was sent to a psychiatric institution where I made the honest and sincere effort to help myself. After I left the hospital I went to a foster home. During my stay I was asked to attend Independent Living Skills Training. During this ten week class we learned skills such as: budgeting, home management, how to find an apartment, cooking, shopping, understanding utility bills, and much more. After completing this class I was asked to attend a statewide youth retreat. During this conference we were introduced to something new the state was offering youth - The Nebraska Foster Care Youth Advisory Board. I applied for the board and was one of the original twelve who were chosen.

The board is just one of the programs funded through the Federal Independent Living Initiative. The purpose of our board is to serve as a voice for youth in foster care. We are responsible for sharing experiences with youth, caseworkers, judges, and others involved in the system. We do this by serving as a panel, producing informative skits on video and guest performances, and distributing a quarterly newsletter for all foster children age sixteen and older. We are the voice for approximately 1,000 foster children age sixteen and older across the state.

We are facing a serious problem, and today I ask for your help on behalf of myself, the board, the Independent Living Program, and all of the children we are voices for. First, youth need to be prepared for independent living at a much younger age. We believe that if we can learn these skills at a younger age we can be better prepared and able to be self-supporting in the long run. Most importantly though, our program is not guaranteed federal funding after September 30, 1993. Without this funding our program will not survive. These programs are vital to the children of our state. We would like to

ask you to remember our programs when the Independent Living Initiative comes around for your vote. Thank you for your time in reviewing my testimony, and for your continued interest in serving America's youth.

With Deepest Respect,

Lisa Romeo

Lisa Romeo
Nebraska

## Prepared Statement of Jennifer E. Elder, Youth Ambassador of Maryland, La Plata, MD

I am Jennifer E. Elder. My mailing address is P.O. Box 1905, La Plata, Maryland 20646. I am twelve (12) years old and attend Somers Middle School, in the eighth grade.

I am aware of the many problems which face young people today--suicide, teen pregnancy, divorce (single parent homes), drugs and alcohol abuse.

I think programs which help young people feel needed, loved, and wanted are important. Programs which have young people involved with good role models and in their community are ideal. I have participated in three programs which I feel are strong in these areas. They are the "SMART", "Peer Tutoring", and "4-H" programs.

The SMART program, housed at the Charles County Community College, sponsors the S*T*A*R Video Contest. This contest encourages young people to research and write scripts which they later video tape. The purpose is to deliver a message against drugs and alcohol, to encourage others to be strong and stay away from drugs. The finished video is then aired on our local cable television station.

The Peer Tutoring program provides an opportunity for me and others to take a responsible role in the daily education of elementary students. I found that I looked forward to my tutoring day each week. I improved my grades and the children looked up to me. The children loved participating, as they received special positive attention with their classwork, reading, math, and homework. This was also a time when I helped the teacher put up bulletin boards, prepare copies and aid: in the completion of class projects.

The 4-H program provides adult supervision for activities and projects which have been planned by its "youth" members. Within the clubs, all the way to national levels, youth find support and friendship (a family) where ever they go or whatever they do.

I agree that children are our greatest asset. I feel it is important to stop and make a special effort towards finding and solving their problems -- our problems.

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF CARRIE ELIZABETH DANUSER, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF NORTH DAKOTA, MARION, ND

My name is Carrie Elizabeth Danuser. I am sixteen years old. I live on a centennial family farm near the small town (169 people) of Marion, North Dakota. Our community is struggling to survive in a depressed economy of agriculturally based businesses. Despite years of economic hardship, our rural people remain committed to a quality way of life. 4-H supports the traditional North Dakota values of a strong work ethic, the responsibilities of citizenship, the commitment to community service and the free enterprise system. The 4-H experience has helped me develop into a well-rounded individual and leader to help address the needs of our North Dakota community through volunteerism.

Our rural school has a challenging limited budget to try to meet the needs of a basic education. 4-H enhances the quality of life and serves educational needs, youth and community leadership development and helps strengthen home and family life.

4-H has citizenship, leadership and project programs that have given me the framework to put knowledge to work. I have organized clothes drives, household goods, canning jars and garden produce drives in the local communities for the Salvation Army.

I have helped lead recycling, tree planting, litter clean up, and painting shelters in our communities. I have also helped tape church services for shut-ins and worked with youth as a chaperon at a 4-H camp. I have made educational toys for use at a day care center. Through 4-H I have taken educational workshops in drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, career opportunities, self-improvement, self-esteem, stress management, suicide prevention, and community involvement.

I have attended intercultural camps and national conferences working with other young people on common goals because of my 4-H experience.

I have taught self-esteem programs for our elementary school, arranged for CPR to be taught annually after school to each sophomore class, helped with drug abuse education in the elementary school, taught "Kid Physics" to grades 4 and 6 and taught preschool Sunday School. I have organized and worked fund raisers for church, P.T.O., 4-H, and school. I am President of my 4-H club, a North Dakota State 4-H Ambassador, a 4-H Youth Leader, Recycling Chairman for our 4-H club, member of LaMoure County 4-H Council, a working member of the State 4-H Curriculum Committee and a volunteer worker in Senator Kent Conrad's Fargo office. 4-H has given me the opportunity for public speaking, emcee and demonstration work at local, district, and state events. I have taught "Consumer Choices" to youth, parents and 4-H leaders as well as communication workshops. I have promoted youth and adult involvement in 4-H, in radio and television interviews and I have done public service announcements on radio promoting opportunities through 4-H.

4-H has given me a wonderful background. 4-H is successful because 4-H works. It develops the individual and the family. It gives the structure to learn to serve the local, state, national, and world communities. 4-H has enabled me to learn by doing and grow in my committment to serve others.

Developing our youth is our greatest asset for achieving a strong and competitive economy with honorable American values serving our families, our communities, our country, and our world.

## Prepared Statement of Anthony W. Thrasher, Youth Ambassador of Illinois, Springfield, IL

Congresswoman Schroeder, Representative Kennedy, and members of the Select Committee:

It is an honor to have the opportunity to speak to you regarding the Springfield Youth Network. As I listened to the many other Youth Ambassadors testify, I was made aware of the many excellect programs nationwide that deal with youth. Many of the programs addressed dealt with "at-risk" children and youth. As urgent as these are, I also think it is important to stress the importance of programs which deal with youth from all backgrounds and encourage them to unite to bring their communities closer together. When this happens, as it does with the Springfield Youth Network, the possibilities are endless!

The Springfield Youth Network (SYNetwork) is a group of community volunteers who are committed to the philosophy that young people are an integrai part of the Springfield community.

As a member of SYNetwork, I have had the pleasure of being involved in many aspects of the organization. This fine program has affected my life, as well as many other youth and adults, in a very positive way.

The SYNetwork began with funds from a United States Department of Education Grant that was piloted in Springfield, Illinois with the purpose of enhancing the school and community partnership in building a comprehensive, community-wide prevention effort.

The SYNetwork is based on a national prevention program called KIDS PLACE, which is located in 10 to 15 cities, including Seattle and St. Louis, throughout the country.

Specifically, the SYNetwork chose to implement most of its efforts in a three-tiered process which included: and environmental survey which was given to all 7th through 12 grade students in the city and surrounding communities; sponsoring a Youth Speakout at which young people could express their opinions and concerns about issues regarding youth in the community today; and developing a Youth Action Agenda to be shared with adults of the Springfield community.

On November 16, 1989, the survey which I took when I was in 8th grade, was administed to the aforementioned students. The survey was designed to obtain information which in turn, would serve as subjects of discussion for the Youth Speakout. The survey results were organized into five specific areas. The areas were: Youth Access to Community Resources; Addressing Youth Worries/Concerns; Alcohol and Drug Concerns; Appropriate "Free Time" Options; and Relationships Between Youth and Community.

On April 29, 1991, the 2nd Annual Youth Speakout was held at Sangamon State University. Approximately 200 youth from both city and county schools attended. I was chosen as a youth facilitator at the event. I was responsible for keeping the discussion flowing in a small group comprised of 20 youth. Although I was to keep my opinions to myself during the small group sessions, I was able to present my personal ideas to the entire body of youth and community leaders at the end of the day in the closing session. This session of the Speakout was run in a "talk show" format with Superintendent Dr. Robert Hill asking questions, the students passing around the microphone, and many ideas being shared. I was also selected from the facilitators to present to the assembly the information discovered on the subject "Providing Free Time Options for Youth". The day ended with pizza, soda, music, and a dance. The entire day left very lasting impressions on all in attendance.

The Youth Action Agenda is an incorporation of information learned from both the Speakout and the survey. This stage involves distributing the Youth Action Agenda to various individuals, community leaders, groups, and agencies, such as the City Council, Board of Educaiton, and Chamber of Commerce. The SYNetwork also hopes to serve as an example and resource for any other interested groups or agencies that have a goal to improve the lives of children and youth.

I.B.M. is playing a big part in our next project. They are offering an advanced computer system which will provide youth with information about community resources at the touch of a button. It will be placed in the White Oaks Mall, a "gathering center" for a majority of the youth in Springfield.

The most recent program has been the establishment of a Student Advisory Board to the Mayor of Springfield. I am honored to have been asked to be a member of this Board. This Board will provide the youth with a direct link to the City Council sharing the concerns of the community as well as the concerns of the youth.

In conclusion, the SYNetwork has affected my life in many ways. I feel I've grown both in responsibility and social awareness. We are already planning a community Newsletter as well as the next Speakout. As a member of the Planning Committee, I can hardly wait to see where the SYNetwork will lead us next!

I thank you for your time and patience. My suggestion to the Committee would be to continue listening to youth and supporting legislation which will help fund and support programs to strengthen youth programs throughout our great nation. We are told that we are the future of our nation and we want to make that future bright. I believe strongly in the concept of the SYNetwork, and I know it and other programs like it, can help solve many problems through teamwork and unity.

Thank you.

## Prepared Statement of Michael J. Dowling, Youth Ambassador of South Carolina, West Columbia, SC

I am a student at the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School in West Columbia, South Carolina. Wil Lou Gray is an alternative boarding school for students at risk of not achieving academic excellence in public schools. I came to Wil Lou Gray because I was not doing well in my home town high school. There was a lot of negative peer pressure to join gangs, try drugs and alcohol, and drop out of school. I was at the point that I was about to give up on myself and my hopes and dreams to study music and write.

When I arrived at Wil Lou Gray I discovered a number of special programs and clubs on campus that the students participate in both during school and after school. I have been fortunate to have participated in the following three. They are the Peer Counselor program, the Team Leader program and the S.M.A.R.T. (Students Manning a Responsible Team) Club.

The S.M.A.R.T. club is the most important to me because it deals with preventing teenage substance abuse. As I was growing up I saw the lives of many friends and people I cared about destroyed through addiction to alcohol and drugs. S.M.A.R.T. club members organize special events on campus, and bring in guest speakers who were once themselves addicted to alcohol. We also look for unique ways to reach other students on campus who might be susceptible to trying and abusing drugs. This past year we wrote a student grant to produce a fifteen minute video called, "YO! Drugs, Don't Do Em."

Although we (the students) did all the writing, acting, singing and camera work, we had a lot of help from a number of teachers, counselors, and artists. The music was written with help of Mr. Terry Scott, one of our youth counselors. Colletta Jefferson, a prevention counselor from the South Carolina Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission was our sponsor. The Arts Commission provided a video director and time in the studio for audio and video editing. A local jazz band donated instruments, studio time and music lessons.

The program used a music video format to show the dangers of drug use. I was one of the main singers and dancers in the show and was also involved in the post production. Recording and mixing the music portions of the video took the longest to complete. We learned about sound mixing, vocal arranging, and retakes, retakes and more retakes. During the month it took to complete the recording, I also learned a lot about how much perseverance and patience it takes to produce a quality program. The video took a lot of hard work but it was worth every minute.

The premiere of the video here at Wil Lou Gray was met with cheers and great enthusiasm from the other students. Many wanted to know how they could be involved in the S.M.A.R.T. club next year. This is a good sign that students want to be drug free, which is part of the criteria for joining the club. All of us were proud of what we had accomplished and several other agencies and schools are interested in showing our video to other students around the state and nation.

Being at Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School has changed me in so many ways. Before coming to Wil Lou Gray, my grades were dropping, my confidence was low and college seemed out of reach. This past year I made the honor roll, was elected editor of the school newspaper and helped other students as a peer counselor. I now plan on attending college and majoring in journalism and minoring in music. I hope that one day I will be a successful journalist or an international recording star.

Being a student at Wil Lou Gray is enabling me to have opportunities and experiences I would not have in any other school setting. The staff encourages academic excellence, self expression and they are there day and night whenever we need someone to confide in. The positive experiences I have had in the past year helped me realize how hard work can pay off and that my dreams for the future can become a reality.

## Prepared Statement of Chuck Paris, President, CEO, and Founder, Positive I.D., Inc., Silver Spring, MD

I would like to begin my testimony by thanking Congressman Jim Bacchus of Florida and his staff for their assistance in providing POSITIVE I. D., Inc. with the guidance to submit written testimony to be included in the Congressional Record of the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Family.

POSITIVE I. D. was incorporated in Orlando, FL in 1990 as a tax-exempt non-profit theatrical corporation. I founded POSITIVE I. D. based on my law enforcement experience as a former U. S. Army military policeman, five year veteran Prince George's County, Maryland police officer and Orange County, Florida deputy sheriff.

After resigning from the Prince George's County Police Department in February of 1990, I relocated to Orlando, FL to pursue a career in acting at the new Universal Studios. While working on several episodes of a television series, I developed the concept for POSITIVE I. D. to teach conflict resolution and communications skills to teenagers in an effort to reduce juvenile related street violence and recidivism.

The name POSITIVE I. D. was taken from the old negative police term which denotes that a "positive identification" has been made on a suspected criminal by a victim. Today, many of our youth are being "positively identified" as criminals and yet, they lack any positive "self" identification as to who they are and as to a purpose for their lives. By providing our youth with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in dealing with everday situations, our youth develop their conflict resolution and communications skills which raises their confidence level while enhancing their self-esteem. This in turn gives a new positive meaning to the term POSITIVE I. D.

POSITIVE I. D. uses a two-fold approach to addressing juvenile related crime. First, POSITIVE I. D. performs two hour live theatrical shows which place actors in scenes based on audience suggestions in which conflicts develop based on relationships, emotions, occupations, peer pressure, drug abuse, criminal activity or other issues relevant to the audience. Once the conflict in the scene is established, the action is stopped to afford time for audience discussion concerning possible actions and outcomes for a successful situation resolution. Members of the audience who suggest a desired resolution are rotated on stage to replace actors thereby gaining hands-on experience while sending a peer to peer message that they are able to handle situations if they only apply themselves and think situations through.

The second approach to reducing juvenile related crime is two hour five week sessions in conflicts which meet once a week. During the classes, juveniles are taught to identify elements of a conflict and how conflicts escalate. Participants are required to script conflict scenes from actual experience, source material (newspaper) or group efforts. These scenes are then evaluated by teen peers and POSITIVE I. D. staff for realism and resolution sequences. Scene material is then used as peer identification source material in live shows.

During my ten years as a law enforcement officer, I encountered thousands of juveniles. Unfortunately, many of the juveniles which I encountered were under arrest or incarcerated. During conversations with juveniles over the years, I found a common theme as to their views concerning court or social juvenile related programs. The most prominent suggestion was that they did not feel that they could "identify" with programs which they had encountered and that they had to feel as though they had a "say" or contribution in determining the program concept and scope. A large majority of juveniles desired to deal in issues which were more "real" or closer to issues which confronted them on a daily or frequert basis.

We are living in a society in which our youth are no longer living in their parent's world but in which parents are living in the world of our youth. Parental education and approachability as to juvenile related issues is mandatory if open communications are to be established between parents and youth. Far too often, juveniles fail to keep parents informed as to issues and situations which face them due to a distant relationship or feeling of worthlessness associated with low self-esteem. Information which was traditionally discussed within the family unit has now become almost exclusive to groups outside the family in which the juvenile finds self worth and identification. This could be considered a fore runner to gang formations and related activity. Without the family as a focal point of communications and association, juveniles develop short term acquaintances which often tend to get them involved in criminal activity. Constant exposure to short term relationships can also set the foundation for lack of commitment in traditional long term relationships such as marriage which could then be identified as the catalyst for the circle in the decline of the family.

In order for juvenile crime and problems associated with juveniles to be reduced, there must be a constant and direct conscious effort to restore the foundation of the family. This is not an individual family effort but a community based effort in which entire apartment buildings or neighborhood blocks unite to work with each other in providing for the needs of each child or parent. If a household is lacking in parental supervision by a father figure due to death or divorce, an established and trusted neighbor might be the single most important factor in maintaining guidance for what would otherwise have been a neglected child.

While POSITIVE I. D. does not teach religion, it would be inappropriate for me to address the foundation of the family without addressing the need for the family to have its base in religion. Faith is the ability to believe. Without the ability to believe, mankind is destined to wander without direction or purpose. An established inner faith or belief in GOD is a basic requirement for the survival of mankind and the development of a sense of purpose. In faith, there is never a need to find self worth in casual acquaintances or in others. Faith allows the search for recognition to end within oneself. Faith also allows for relationships to develop in and among those who have identified themselves and have the ability to share the true inner person with others. The most important attribute of faith development is the growth of inner strength which transcends any obstacle and exceeds the courage of those who choose to walk without faith and purpose.

When all things are considered, there can be no hesitation that mankind is intended to live in unity. We must not forget to establish harmony and equality among every race, every person, every country and among the genders. This can be the the only assurance that we will be able to, "Honor Our Promises to America's Youth".

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID L. LEVY, ESQ., PRESIDENT, NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS, WASHINGTON, DC

Our National Council for Children's Rights urges the U.S. to join the majority of nations of the world who have a national children's day. We are glad that Congress has passed a resolution for three years in a row to declare a National Children's Day on the second Sunday in October.

We urge all Americans to begin celebrating National Children's Day the second Sunday in October.

Our National Council for Children's Rights joins in congratulating the ambassadors of America's youth who have come to Washington today, to report on successful programs to help young people in their states.

And we congratulate the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families for Honoring our Promise to America's Youth today.

We also thank Diana Ross for her efforts on behalf of children.

Our NCCR has 75 different reports, audio/video cassettes, and information on some of the ways to help strengthen families. We would be glad to make this information available to interested persons at any time. Thank you.

## Prepared Statement of Larry LaRocco, a Representative in Congress From the State of Idaho

MR. CHAIRMAN: I appreciate having an opportunity to address you this morning. Your work on behalf of young people continues to highlight the issues and concerns that all Americans must consider as the nation faces the next decade and the next century. Our young people represent the future of the nation, and we must not fail them.

This morning, I am here to add my congratulations to the chorus of voices in praise of the outstanding young people from around the nation who have come to Washington, D.C. with special and personal messages for their leaders.

The young woman who speaks on behalf of Idaho's young people, Shelby Justesen, is from my district. She is an outstanding representative, and an example of the promise the young people in Idaho represent for the future of the entire nation.

Shelby is a participant in the Parents and Youth Against Drug Abuse program, which is also known as PAYADA. In this capacity, she has helped numerous people, young and old, to understand more about drugs, and the way they can damage children, youth and families. Her work is personal, and her

commitment to the cause can best be appreciated by hearing her own words. For my part, I hope that Shelby continues her work with PAYADA on behalf of the people of Idaho. There is no doubt in my mind that she has touched the lives of many people, and altered the future in important ways.

The organization Shelby works with has a unique position in the community. Although it is sponsored by the Boise City Police Department, it operates independently as a community based, non-profit enterprise. PAYADA is a primary prevention program designed for parents of elementary and junior high school aged youth. Through the utilization of community volunteers, the program provides parents and their children an opportunity to learn more about drugs, and the role of families in preventing drug abuse.

PAYADA was organized in 1981 by the Boise Police Department and was incorporated as a non-profit enterprise in 1985. PAYADA is a member of the National Federation of Parents for Drug Free Youth, and has received several awards in recognition of their outstanding work from business and community groups, including the Chamber of Commerce and the Boise Cascade Corporation.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for holding these hearings this morning, and for the opportunity to join in praise of these outstanding young people. Shelby is making a difference in her community everyday. I am pleased to know her, and I am certain

that her message, and the messages of the other young people who are here today to address the Committee, will light the way to a better future for all Americans. Thank you.

JIM BACCHUS
11th District, Florida

MEMBER
BANKING, FINANCE AND URBAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

SCIENCE, SPACE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

# Congress of the United States
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October 9, 1991

Ms. Joan Godley
Clerk
Select Committee on Children,
Youth and Families
H2-385 Ford House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ms. Godley:

I am pleased to submit written testimony on behalf of my Citizen Advisory Committee on Children, Youth and Families to the Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families' September 30, 1991 hearing -- "National Children's Day: Honoring Our Promises to America's Youth." Also attached is a list of the members who serve on my advisory committee and the subcommittee members who drafted this testimony.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to share my advisory committee's views on the federal government's role in preserving the interests of America's families and I highly commend the Select Committee for their efforts to highlight National Children's Day throughout the country.

If you have any questions about this testimony please contact Patricia Bortz of my Orlando office.

With warmest regards,

Sincerely,

Jim Bacchus
Member of Congress

JB:pxb
Enclosures

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JIM BACCHUS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA AND THE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES, CENTRAL FLORIDA

Congressman Jim Bacchus' Citizen Advisory Committee on Children, Youth and Families wishes to commend the United States Congress for its continued expression of the importance of the family. Congress has expressed its concern for families in the passage of the "ABC Bill," now the Child Care and Development Block Grant. The rules for this legislation make it clear that it is the intent at the federal level for families to have the joy and responsibility of caring for their own children and making their own decisions about the day care provider in the parents' absence. The rules for the bill guarantee parental choice while subsidizing the parents' ability to pay for the care. This is a significant expression of confidence in the American family. It also serves to strengthen the family in helping parents to care for their children rather than wresting that responsibility from them.

In 1986, the Congress once again expressed its concern for families and children with the passage of landmark legislation, Public Law 99-457, Part H. The primary purpose of this law is to provide states with funds to plan and coordinate a comprehensive system of early intervention for infants and toddlers who are disabled and developmentally delayed. Given the current budgetary crisis in our state of Florida, federal dollars are essential to the implementation of these entitlement services which was the original intent of the 1986 law. Congress, in its wisdom, has taken a very important first step towards securing a future for all of America's children and youth. However, additional technical assistance and continued funding is crucial to our state's efforts to insure that the early intervention services as outlined in Publc Law 99-457 are to become a reality for Florida's infants and toddlers.

In these and other federal actions Congress has exhibited its interest in the self-sufficiency of the American family and we endorse that concept. This opens the door to developing partnerships with the corporate sector and enables communities to expand on the President's "Points of Light" theme.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF KRISTINA KALLEY, YOUTH AMBASSADOR OF FLORIDA, MADISON, FL

Foster care has changed my life greatly. It has given me a sense of stability within a family environment. My life would have taken a different course if I hadn't been placed in a foster home three years ago. If it hadn't been for the caring and loving foster homes I was placed in, my lifestyle would have been a lot different today.

I was abused by my paternal grandmother for seven years after my mother died. I accepted this as a somewhat normal lifestyle until I was twelve years old. My brother, sister and I ran away from my grandmother's house. We were moved to and from four different relatives' homes. My brother stayed with an aunt in Tampa, Fla. My sister and I were moved back to Perry, Fla., and put in foster care.

My sister was moved after four months to another foster home. I remained for six months. My sister and I were both put back with my grandmother to give her another chance. Tne abuse began toward me and persisted. I rebelled against any sense of authority. Finally I was placed back with my previous foster family.

I was moved after five months to another foster home in Madison, Fla. Not because of anything I did, either. I was totally against the move. I had thought I would live with my other foster parents forever. Moving again was hard, very hard but after a few months I adjusted. My father's rights were taken away and I was released for adoption. My new foster mother promised me I wouldn't have to move again. After being in this home a year and a half as a foster daughter, I was legally adopted.

People say I'm lucky. I think that is true to this day. There are a lot of children not as fortunate as I am. Foster care has given me a chance for a new life and something I've never had before, a caring family. Our home is still a licensed foster care home. I can relate to the new foster brothers and sisters in this house. I have been there.

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